Labor's Dividends – The Record for Six Months

new Masses

JULY 9, 1935 10c

A Glimpse At Soviet America

By EARL BROWDER

The Radio Racket By LUCIEN ZACHAROFF

IFFAULT Reviews FORSYTHE'S Redder than the Rose

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New Masses

JULY 9, 1935

William Sanderson

The Third Coal Truce

OF THE many weird chapters in American labor history few equal the events in Washington last week-end. Perhaps the notorious Washington summer was responsible, but somebody forgot to tip the President off that close to half a million miners were going to strike within thirty-six hours. Mr. Roosevelt had thought the coal operators and John L. Lewis, chief of the United Mine Workers, were, as usual, settling their differences amicably over the conference table. Mr. Lewis has a fine way of settling the miners' problems and the President has a lot of faith in Mr. Lewis. But even the President can be wrong. In a remarkable reversal of form Mr. Lewis early Saturday afternoon filed 5,000 telegrams calling practically every bituminous miner in America on strike. When the President was finally informed, he seized the phone and called Miss Perkins. The Secretary of Labor promptly summoned the reporters and Mr. Lewis and read them a statement: "I want to ask Mr. Lewis, on behalf of the administration—I have consulted the President and we believe the public good demands it—if the United Mine Workers can see their way clear to call off the strike for at least thirty days with the understanding that an agreement would be pushed during that time with the operators." Miss Perkins carried on nobly, though she was considerably harried by personal problems. "It so happened," The Times reporter tells us, "that between intervals [of the negotiations] Secretary Perkins had to supervise the moving of her furniture and belongings from her old home to her new residence, and it was finally at her new home that the conference arranged by her took place." Meanwhile, 450,000 miners had received telegrams calling for a strike Monday morning.

BUT the Secretary of Labor and the President and "the public good" prevailed, despite the disarranged furniture in Miss Perkins' parlor. Lewis grumpily acceded to the "suggestion of the truce extension"—the third truce in as many months. He had just spent $5,000 telegraphing the miners of America to down tools. But the President's word is law to John L. He spent another $5,000 in telegrams advising the miners to pick their tools up again. "We are doing this for the President and not the operators," he explained. In case the miners still found it hard to understand: "We are conceding again to the public interest." The truce was called on the understanding that the Guffey coal bill "designed to stabilize conditions in the industry" would be passed immediately. In the meanwhile the present agreement stands. The $5 a day wage level stands (the cost of living is up 25 percent in the mining fields). The anti-strike and open-shop clauses of the present agreement stand. The coal operators manifested little concern over the events. As the press had it: "Operators were declared to be not avers
since they had mined la
coal recently [after the first two truces] and could afford a period of inactivity." What are 450,000 miners thinking today? Roosevelt need not call on his G men to find out; West Brownsville, Pa., may be the key to the question. A conference of ten local unions decided to lay off work and call a mass meeting to spread strike action.

Cracking Down on Relief

EVEN before he officially assumed his duties as Administrator of the Federal Works Program in New York City this week, General Hugh S. Johnson "cracked-down"—on the workers. The strike-busting, blustering former chief of the N.R.A. seemingly intoxicated—with a sense of his own impor-

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tance—outlined his proposed policy thus: "Wherever a worker gets a chance to take a private job, even if it pays less than he is getting on relief, he should be made to take the private job." Later he added that the Federal Government should make up the difference between this wage and relief. Johnson is thus contributing his bit to the campaign of employers to press wages lower still. He would have the government subsidize private industry to achieve capitalism's goal of making one vast sweatshop out of the nation. Just what wage level Johnson favors in private industry is clear when you remember that perhaps 75 percent of relief workers get less than $15 a week, while home relief in New York City for hundreds of thousands of families is less than $9 a week—often much less. Johnson cracked-down while he was commenting on the inability of New Jersey berry growers to induce relief recipients to take jobs for two or three weeks at the "customary" pay of $4.50 a week for six ten-hour days! Those taking these temporary jobs, would, of course, be cut off from relief, in many cases permanently.

WAS Johnson's statement an official trial balloon sent out for an administration notorious for its wage-cutting, strikebreaking policies and for which the military Johnson did such valiant service in the San Francisco general strike? So far, neither Roosevelt nor Hopkins, to whom alone Johnson is responsible, has repudiated this latest assault on the workers. Their [illegible] would seem to imply agreement. [illegible]hoice of Johnson as New [illegible]rator of the Federal [illegible] program is significant. Despite his bombast, Johnson as head of the N.R.A. served the administration and the interests of the employers so well that he has been given his present assignment to carry out at all costs the Roosevelt dictum: "We will and must get out of this business of relief." But while the administration may remain silent, a storm of protest was aroused among workers, professionals, liberals and others at Johnson's decree. Relief has failed so signally to keep people anywhere nearly properly fed, clothed and housed that officials privately admitted they feared bread riots this summer in New York City. The latest attack not only on relief standards, but the whole wage scale of the country, has stirred the masses to action. In Harlem, where relief conditions are intolerably intensified by the discrimination against Negroes, the League of Struggle for Negro Rights has already launched a campaign for Johnson's removal. A demand for the General's immediate ousting will also be made at a demonstration at City Hall on July 13 called by the Unemployment Councils in which other organizations no doubt will take part.

Troops in Tacoma

TRUCKS full of troops rumbled into Tacoma last week as they had into Omaha a week before. The three-months-old lumber strike had got under the skin of the owners—and they told the Governor of Washington what to do about it. In every section where lumber mills have been shut down by the strike—Portland, Everett, Eureka—threats of troops hang over the heads of the workers. On the other hand, despite the National Guard in Tacoma, teamsters and longshoremen support the lumber workers. The Everett Labor Council has warned owners that if the Guard comes into that port they will be met by a city-wide general strike. Meanwhile, as events in the Northwest bring back memories of last year's Maritime Strike, longshoremen refuse to unload lumber in any port on the Coast. In San Francisco, cargo arriving on boats loaded by strike breakers in Vancouver has remained untouched. The Waterfront Association screams "Violation of agreements!" and retaliates by refusing work to fifty-seven gangs of stevedores. This move is deliberately coordinated with efforts by Green, Woll et al to regain control over unions which have turned to rank-and-file leaders for direction. Recently Paul Scharrenberg (the William Green of the Sailors' and affiliated unions) was expelled; this action strikes at the very top of A.F. of L. officialdom and terrifies the Old Guard. The battle on the West Coast gathers momentum: the reactionary officials want to "cleanse" unions of "trouble-makers" before the militants finally rid their organizations of old-time fixtures who have been such a comfort to employers for the last thirty years.

All Ports Closed!

THE Committee of 1000 can pass resolutions. They can organize into semi-military groups and terrorize militant workers. The police protect them, the Industrial Association helps support them, the New Crusaders ballyhoo their "ideals." But despite the continual violence and persecution, the militant labor movement gains strength. The West Coast Maritime Strike of last year was the first united expression of the workers up and down the Coast. Out of that grew the Federation of Marine Unions. On July 5, the Marine Unions will close every Pacific Coast port for a one-day strike in memory of "Bloody Thursday" just one year ago. Howard Sperry and Nicholas Coundeorakis (called Bourdois) were murdered by the police when the Industrial Association of San Francisco ordered cargo moved: Coundeorakis fell with a bullet above his heart; Howard Sperry crumpled up with three bullets in his arm and nine bullets in his back. They were buried by the workers of San Francisco. At the grave of Coundeorakis—a Communist Party member—the workers pledged "We shall build a great monument to you—a great working-class movement, that will fight for the day when society shall be just and life decent. . . . Yours is the noblest death that any worker can die—fighting for his class." In memory of these two dead workers, over forty-thousand men will lay down their tools and close the ports.

—But Farleys Can Figure

JAMES ALOYSIUS FARLEY, Postmaster General, regaled the citizens of Elmira, N. Y., the other day with such marvels as must have made them giddy. "The N.R.A. functioned for two years," he announced, "and in that time was able to give an impetus to business, the momentum of which will carry us through to the goal to which the Democratic Party directed itself when it came into Federal power." That goal, you'll remember, was "recovery." Farley was not in the least disturbed by the fact that when the N.R.A. folded up, the business index was actually lower than in the corresponding periods of both 1934 and 1933. "We have come through the crisis," he went on, "without riots or other social disturbances." San Francisco general strike, did you say? Toledo? Minneapolis? Textile strike? Call those social disturbances?

FARLEY hurried on to list among Roosevelt's achievements, as summarized by The New York Times, that it "lifted the earning capacity of workers from $36 to $59 on every hundred and brought re-employment to nearly

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60 percent of those out of work." What Farley meant by the first part we don't know; the second part, about the reduction of unemployment seems to convey an idea, or a belief, however. It was too bad that the National Industrial Conference Board had to go and spoil it, the very next day. The board published this comparison of figures on unemployment: totally unemployed, May, 1934: 9,201,000; totally unemployed, May, 1935: 9,711,000—an *increase* of 510,000. The most recent American Federation of Labor figures list 11,500,000 unemployed, compared with 11,793,000 in July, 1933, shortly after the launching of the N. R.A.—a decline of only 293,000. The actual number of unemployed is, of course, greater than either of these two groups is willing to admit, probably more than 15,000,000 How did Farley get his 60-percent reduction in the jobless? With the same magic wand with which he conjured a deficit in the Postoffice Department into a surplus—by faking the figures.

The Second Youth Congress

JUST as the Second American Youth Congress is about to convene, President Roosevelt announces his new $50,000,000 National Youth Administration. To date the nation's unemployed youth have been entirely neglected. Suddenly the administration plans to spend what at first sight appears to be a sizeable sum on young men and women. But accepting even the official figures (grossly underestimated) of 620,000 unemployed youth, simple arithmetic shows that each will receive $80 a year or about $1.54 a week. And of course, Mr. Roosevelt expects business men to help absorb the surplus youth—though it seems that business men have been unable to absorb the already huge surplus of experienced workers. It does not require particular insight to realize that the powers at Washington, repulsed in their attempt to build up a fascist youth movement at Louisville, alarmed at the Congress meeting this week in Detroit, has attempted to checkmate the Congress by the new machinery. But the plan won't work. Youth has learned much in five years of capitalist crisis.

Victories in China

THE two outstanding occurrences in Far Eastern politics are the great advances made by the Chinese Red Army in Szechuan province and the capitulation of Chiang Kai-shek to Japanese imperialism in North China. The principal objective of the Red Armies in western China has been to bring about a juncture of their main contingents which were concentrating on the heart of Szechuan province from various directions, and to establish a well-intrenched Soviet district that would provide a base for further expansion. This objective was partly attained June 16 when the main force of the Red Army marching northwestward from Kiangsi and the Szechuan Red forces descending southwestward from northern Szechuan joined forces at Tienchuan. This is a strategic town situated 70 miles southwest of Chengtu, the capital of Szechuan. This achievement united the two strongest contingents of the Chinese Red Army, the one commanded by Mao Tse-tung and Chu Te and the other commanded by Hsu Hsiang-chien and formed a combined force of 200,000 armed men, the largest Red Army ever to assemble at one place in China.

ON JUNE 10, six days before the Red Army's victory in Szechuan, North China passed into the hands of Japanese imperialism as the result of Chiang Kai-shek's disgraceful capitulation. Without a word of protest and without even a pretense at resistance, Chiang Kai-shek permitted the Japanese Army to occupy large sections of Chinese territory and obeyed the dictates of the Japanese Army command. He withdrew Chinese troops, dismissed Chinese officials in Hopei Province, replaced them with hand-picked candidates of the Japanese imperialists and complied with all other demands of Japan. A few days later, on the 18th, the same thing was done in Chahar. The capitulation was so servile and complete that even a spokesman of the Japanese Army expressed surprise and admitted to a correspondent of The New York Herald Tribune that "the National Government has gone further than we expected."

AS THE details of the agreement between Nanking and Japan are secret, the exact extent of the capitulation is not yet known. But most commentators agree that, for all practical purposes, the two provinces can no more be considered as belonging to China. The fate of the other three provinces north of the Yellow River, Shansi, Suiyuan and Shantung, remains extremely uncertain. Rumors concerning the possible establishment of a pup-

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RUSSELL T. LIMBACH, HERMAN MICHELSON, LOREN MILLER, JOSEPH NORTH,
ASHLEY PETTIS, WILLIAM RANDORF.
WILLIAM BROWDER, *Business Manager*

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pet North China state embodying the five provinces north of the Yellow River probably have pretty substantial foundation. Conscious of the dangerous significance of his own betrayal, Chiang Kai-shek has kept the news of these occurrences from publication in the Chinese newspapers. But such a national crisis cannot remain a secret long. Once the news becomes generally known, a nationwide anti-Japanese and anti-Chiang Kai-shek mass movement is bound to develop, and the Chinese people will, more than ever, look toward the Chinese Communist Party and the Red Army for leadership.

AND now reports of Japanese cavalry and gunboats entering Soviet territory appear in the press. A detachment of troops advanced past the Soviet border on June 23; three days later, another group in battle formation invaded nearby territory and went through sham maneuvers. Later on the same day a cavalry unit crossed the border. Both cases were noted by Red Army guards who refused to be drawn into conflict and thus provide the Japanese with a story of "provocation." During the same week, Japanese gunboats entered the Poyarkov River, once more violating international boundaries —this time actually sailing into the internal water system of the U.S.S.R. which is closed to foreign ships. They were met at the entrance by coast-guard boats which signalled "Entrance to the stream prohibited!" The gunboats steamed ahead, past Soviet motor-boats which they proceeded to photograph. What in other countries would undoubtedly have led to serious repercussions was smoothed over by the desire of the Soviet Union for peaceful relations with its neighbors. But Japan's provocative acts grow more menacing each day—and forewarn of the danger of an actual armed invasion of the Soviet Union.

Reprimanding an Admiral

REAR Admiral Yates Stirling, Jr., commanding the Brooklyn Navy Yard, was asleep in his headquarters one afternoon recently. Just then, in Washington, Secretary of the Navy Swanson, yielding to growing mass protest, issued an official reprimand to Stirling for his advocacy, in an article in the Hearst press, of war against the Soviet Union. Swanson said he considered it "improper" for Navy officers to publish "controversial comment on international affairs that might be construed as offensive to foreign governments." When, forced by pressure of popular indignation, Swanson transmitted his official letter to Congress, it was found the Secretary of the Navy directed Stirling to discontinue publication of any similar chauvinistic articles. It also was revealed that Rear Admiral J. K. Tausig officially censured Stirling for violating Naval regulation by publishing his article. But although Stirling was asleep at his post at the moment, although Representative Maverick, discussing the case, referred to Stirling as "a chattering old fool," no one should be lulled into believing that the Rear Admiral has ceased to be a menace to the peace of the world and with Hearst, a sinister figure in the machinations against the Soviet Union. The reprimand was wrung from the reluctant Swanson, who refused to act before; the demand for Stirling's ousting, initiated by The Daily Worker, arose from the vast masses of people in all strata in America. This demand must be carried on. Representative Marcantonio, who started a fight in Congress to censure Stirling, expressed himself as dissatisfied with Swanson's action. Unless he is ousted, Stirling may again break loose with his poisonous propaganda to which his official position enables him to give wide distribution. The Hearst papers will see to that. Only recently they displayed a story signed by Hearst's friend, Alfred Rosenberg, Nazi chief of foreign propaganda. Hitler's lieutenant gloated over the Anglo-Reich naval arms treaty as another "bar to the menace of Bolshevism" and alluded to the "necessity" for action against the Soviet Union. With so large a part of victory already achieved in the fight to have Stirling removed, the protests should be intensified until that goal is reached.

Two Kinds of Social Security

THE words "social security" have a high sound, but they can mean many things. In Soviet Russia they mean real security (which is after all the base of the Soviet system), a real social insurance for the working class. But the bill that Congress has just passed amid loud fanfare from the commercial press and in which the words "social security" figure prominently, is in reality the exact opposite to the Soviet precedent. It brings security not for the workers but for the capitalist system. It is so crass a piece of social flim-flam that even the liberal press was constrained to protest. The largest burden of the future support of the aged is placed upon the employed workingmen—and, ostensibly, on their employers. There need not be a moment's doubt as to what the employers will do. They will pass their levy on to the consumers. And who are the consumers? The workers, who will already have had a sizable percentage of their meager wage taken from them to support the needy. Behind the rhetoric one discovers that big business has again benefited at the expense of the rest of the population. It was to this type of "security" that President Roosevelt referred when he stated:

> The establishment of sound means towards a greater future economic security of the American people is dictated by a prudent consideration of the hazards involved in our national life. No one can guarantee this country against the dangers of future depressions but we can reduce these dangers. . . . We pay now for the dreadful consequences of economic insecurity—and dearly. This plan presents a more equitable and infinitely less expensive means of meeting these costs.

The Committee on Economic Security—their recommendations formed the basis of the bill—also voiced a concern for the capitalist system ("our national life") and the necessity for reducing its hazards. The solution, they found, was to spread the cost of economic insecurity among the workers. Thus their report to President Roosevelt read in part:

> This program will involve considerable cost. The measures we suggest should result, in the long run, in material reduction in the cost to society of destitution and dependence and we believe, will immediately be helpful in allaying those fears

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which open the door to unsound proposals. The program will promote social and industrial stability and will operate to enlarge and make steady a widely diffused purchasing power upon which depends the high American standard of living and the internal market for our mass production, industry and agriculture.

The bill contains all the recommendations of the National Retail Merchants Committee on Unemployment Insurance. Samuel Rayburn, chairman, argued before the House Ways and Means Committee against any changes. The Business Advisory Council of the Department of Commerce helped draw it up. And the Council was composed of such "liberal" finance capitalists as Gerard Swope of General Electric Company, Walter C. Teagle, Morris Leeds, Sam Lewisohn and Marion B. Folsom.

When Representative Hamilton Fish enthusiastically hails legislation, something is up. And he likes the Social Security Bill. But a comparison of its provisions and those of the social insurance code now in force in the Soviet Union reveals some startling differences that throw light on the paths taken by the diametrically opposed economic systems of American capitalism and the workers' Socialist Republic:

U. S. S. R.	U. S. A.
All workers are insured. According to 1932 figures, 22 million persons or 99 percent of the total number of workers were protected.	The majority of the workers are not covered by the economic security bill, which provides no genuine insurance even for those who do come under it.
All economic risks are insured against by a unified, integrated system.	A few hazards are partly insured against by a hodge-podge of systems.
The entire cost of social insurance is paid for by the employer—the state.	Only a portion of the various costs is paid by the employer—a cost that he eventually deducts from wages.
The worker contributes nothing.	Under both the old-age and unemployment insurance plans of the economic security bill, the worker is compelled to contribute.
The entire social insurance system is compulsory.	Only the old-age and unemployment insurance plans are compulsory and then to a very small degree. Company systems will virtually be permitted.
The average rate of contribution by the employer covering all risks is 13 percent of payroll; sometimes the rate is as high as 15 percent and 20 percent and in addition to the payrolls—"socialized wages."	During the first year the employer pays no more than 1 percent of payroll for unemployment and 1 percent for old age insurance. The most the employer will have to pay in future years for unemployment insurance is 3 percent—for old age insurance 2½ percent.
Prior to 1933 the Commissariat of Labor administered the social insurance system with the collaboration of the trade unions. Today the system is administered directly by the trade unions in the various industries.	The workers are excluded from any share in management or administration of either the old age or unemployment plans. A Social Insurance Board appointed by the President is to have complete administrative power.
Due to the absence of unemployment since 1930, unemployment insurance has been suspended. When in operation the plan extended wage-benefits to all of the jobless for an eighteen-month period.	No more than $15 per week for a maximum of fifteen weeks is contemplated under the economic security bill.
A comprehensive old-age insurance system was recently launched. It is intended to care for all aged workers.	The economic security bill provides for a relief-pension for the aged now destitute, an old age insurance plan to which workers must contribute and a voluntary annuity system for persons of small incomes.
In the case of the death of a worker or of his dependents, funeral expenses are paid for.	No provision.
All workers obtain benefits if incapacitated by an industrial accident or industrial disease.	The economic security bill makes no provision for insurance of industrial accidents or occupational illness. (Such hazards are left to the voluntary efforts of employers to reduce accidents and to forty-four different laws —majority elective— in some forty-four states.)
Women are freed from work eight weeks before and eight weeks after confinement; full wages are paid during this period.	No provision.
All workers permanently incapacitated by an industrial accident or occupational disease are entitled to pensions.	No provision.
Full wages are paid to workers during periods of illness.	No provision.
Medical treatment given all workers.	No provision.
The expenditure by the state for social insurance was 39 percent of the workers' wages in 1932. That is, the worker receives, in addition to his regular wages, a 39 percent socialized wage.	One hundred million dollars has been appropriated by Congress to initiate the President's plan; total wages in 1933 was about twenty-nine billion. The real burden, the taxes, are to be borne by the workers.
Special dietetic treatment, including overnight rest homes for workers whose condition is not such as to necessitate their giving up work but who require diet and treatment.	No provision.
Additional nurseries, kindergartens, milk stations and camps for workers' children.	No provision.

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William Gropper

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What Is Communism?

10. A Glimpse at Soviet America

EARL BROWDER

SCORES of questions have been put to us asking, in one form or another, what a Soviet America would look like. There is a great temptation to answer with an imaginative picture of the glories of an America released from capitalist sabotage. But the imagination is staggered by the first approach to this task. And, after all, of more value is the sober examination of those objective facts of the already achieved productive forces, to see what can be done even without going a step farther than the technical achievements of capitalism.

To what extent can we take the experience of the Soviet Union as a forecast of what a Soviet America would look like?

In certain respects it gives us an accurate forecast; in other respects the question in America will be placed quite differently. The principles upon which a Soviet America would be organized would be the same, in every respect, as those which have guided the Soviet Union. But in our case, these principles would be applied, not to the most backward but to the most advanced capitalist country. This makes for tremendous differences in the physiognomy of the new society.

In Russia the actual seizure of power and establishment of the Soviet Government was relatively easy and almost bloodless; only afterward came the imperialist intervention, prolonged civil war and capitalist-inspired wrecking which, added to the ruin the World War inflicted upon a backward country, left the Soviet Government with the task of building from the ground up in the midst of a hostile world.

In America most of our difficulties lie precisely in the achievement of power for the working class, in the establishment of the Soviet Government; after that has been accomplished, the American capitalists will have no great powerful allies from abroad to help them continue the struggle; it will *already* be clear that world capitalism has received its death-blow; and the Soviet Government of America will take over a society already technically prepared for Communism. Where in Russia it was necessary to go through the prolonged period of War Communism, the N.E.P., the First and Second Five Year Plans, in America we will *start* economically at a stage even further advanced, at about the point which Russia will reach in her Fourth Five Year Plan.

The only thing that could change this basic perspective for America would be a possible, but unpredictable, destruction of American economy by an imperialist war, carried out by agencies of destruction hitherto unknown.

The United States, in short, contains already all the prerequisites for a Communist society except the one single factor of Soviet Power. In Russia, Lenin said, several years after 1917, "The Soviet Power, plus electrification, equals Communism." In America the electrification already exists, so we can shorten Lenin's formula.

The question is, then, given the American working class in undisputed power, what would be the possible and probable course of development of the economic and social life of the country?

The new government would immediately take over and operate all the banks, railroads, water and air transport, mines and all major trustified industries. Minor industries, municipal public utilities and the distributive occupations would be reorganized as functions of local government or as cooperatives or, in some instances, as auxiliaries of major industries. Large-scale agriculture would be taken over and operated by the government, while the mass of small farms would be encouraged to combine into voluntary cooperatives for large-scale production with State aid.

All available man-power would be put to work immediately, first of all in the direct production of material wealth, second in its distribution and third in the social services of health, education and entertainment.

Every able-bodied person would be required to go to work and for this receive wages according to a scale socially determined. Such a wage-scale might range, for example, from a minimum of $2,000 per year up to $10,000 or higher, at present values. The average, according to the most conservative estimates of present capacity, after making allowance for capital accumulation, would be about $5,000 per year for each family in the United States. That can be taken as the immediate minimum standard of living under a Soviet Government in America.

In what form would this be made available to the population? Many questions have been raised, asking whether there would not be such regimentation, such monotonous uniformity, even with such high standards measured in volume, as to take the salt out of life. Such doubters visualize the citizens of Soviet America living in uniform barracks, wearing uniform clothing prescribed by law, eating the same meals, reading the same books and newspapers, seeing the same entertainments, thinking the same thoughts, etc., etc. That picture of Communist society is the bogey-man created by the propagandists for capitalism, but the closest that humanity will ever get to such a stage is the present moment under capitalism. These gentlemen would have us believe that Communism will merely take the worst features of capitalism and make it the universal rule. Why we should do such stupid things, no one can explain.

The fact is, of course, that the Communist reality would be quite different from this doleful picture. For the first time we could escape from the terrible housing imposed by capitalism and begin to get modern, decent homes for everybody. Even the first simple redistribution of existing housing would revolutionize this situation. We could smash the uniformity of clothing imposed by the combination of our own poverty and capitalist mass production. For the first time in our lives the majority could eat what their tastes dictate, because for the first time they could afford it. And for the first time, the human mind would be liberated from the slavery to Hollywood, Hearst & Co.

Why can we be sure that we would have all these desirable things? Because there would be nothing to prevent us from having them if we want them. We would have the power to form our lives the way we choose; we have every reason, therefore, to expect that the choice will not be the stupid, reactionary nonsense described by the enemies of Communism.

The primary concern of the Soviet Government will be *production;* this will be highly centralized, to realize the benefits of the highest technical achievements. All means of production will be socialized, taken out of private control. But *consumption* will be socialized only upon a voluntary basis, with the greatest flexibility and freedom of choice for each individual. And the greater grows the flow of *production* of wealth, the more complete will become the *freedom of consumption,* up to the point where all consumption will become absolutely free and unfettered.

ONLY under such a society can we expect to witness the full unfolding of the marvelous potentialities of the human spirit, the development of human genius and individuality raised to the *n*th power because it is the power no longer of a few exceptional individuals but of the million masses of free men and women.

Many of our questioners have asked: "But how can the industries be kept operating at capacity without the profit motive? Will not a bureaucratic apparatus grow up in control which will become a new ruling class? And do we not have again the seeds of the old profit motive in the unequal wages, etc.,

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which even you admit will exist under socialism?"

We expect our socialist factories to produce at top speed, precisely because the "profit motive" has been eliminated. That famous old profit motive, which used to open up factories in the youth of capitalism, operates in modern times mainly to close them down. The administrative apparatus of a socialist economy can never become a new ruling class, because it lacks precisely that *private ownershhip,* that monopoly of the means of life of the masses, which is the foundation of class divisions in society.

No, the old profit motive is not creeping back into the socialist society through the unequal wages, etc. The profit motive has nothing to do with wages, equal or unequal, notwithstanding Mr. Roosevelt's efforts in his message to Congress last January, to picture the whole population of the country as living on profits and depending upon increased profits for an increased standard of living. Such a conception of profits belongs not to the literature of economics, but that of the bedtime stories for children. Profit is only that appropriation from the current production of society which is based upon and justified by, the *private ownership* of the socially-used means of production. The profit-motive is never anything else than that motive of the *owners,* as owners, to allow their property to be used for production in the expectation of realizing an increasing proportion of the product as profit. The motive of those who do the producing never was, is not and can never be, a "profit-motive" but exists only in spite of profit and in constant antagonism to it. The removal of profit under socialism releases the basic human motives to labor from their greatest handicap.

What are the human motives to labor? The most primitive and almost the only ones under capitalism are the fear of hunger and want, the desire to escape starvation. Under capitalism, the highest development of this motive is the ambition to rise, by hard labor, out of the laboring class into the petty-bourgeoisie. Under socialism, this most primitive motive will be applied mainly in the remaking of bourgeois elements into workers. For the main mass of workers, socialism introduces new motives, social motives, the motives of social emulation, the honor and heroism of producers serving society and not private profit-takers.

Under socialism, labor becomes more and more of a privilege instead of a burden; it carries with it its own rewards, of which the material aspect becomes less and less important, the aspect of social recognition becomes more and more dominant.

And what a gigantic motive-power for society is this new motive of socialist labor! What an expansion of the human powers is brought about by it! Already the Soviet Union has given us a few glimpses into the profound revolution in human nature that is brought about by the operation of this new motive in human activity.

Socialism is not only a revolution in economic life. It makes an entirely new human race. It takes this man who has been brutalized and degraded through the ages by the violence and oppression of class societies, frees him from this woeful heritage, carries over from the past only the achievements of the human mind and not its crimes and stupidities and remakes man, molding him in the heat of socialist labor into the new social being.

The rising socialist system in the Soviet Union has, for years now, demonstrated that in the expansion of material production it outdistances capitalism in the period of its youth by seven or eight-fold. In the production of superior types of human being, the superiority of socialism is demonstrated a thousand times more decisively. Capitalism, even in decay, can still produce material wealth, even though the amount becomes smaller; but in the production of the higher types of men and the raising of the social level of the population as a whole, the capitalist system has completely lost what power it had in its youth; today it is corrupting and degrading whole populations and poisons and stultifies its own geniuses.

Today it has become clear that all human progress is possible only in struggle against the capitalist system and its agents, only in the fight for socialism as the next stage in the historical march toward the classless, Communist society.

Letters from Readers

EARL BROWDER

Religion Minus the Supernatural

Earl Browder,
c/o NEW MASSES:

I assume that there are people who feel at home only in a Communist world except that they still find some attraction in elements of their particular religious background. They may be considered potential Communists, who derive a great deal of aesthethic, intellectual and social satisfaction out of the religious tradition into which they were born. These people experience an inner conflict between their Communist and religious tendencies. I suppose that the Communist sees this conflict as inevitable but temporary, trusting and working for the victory of the Communist tendency and the defeat of what he considers its opposite.

Your article on "Communism and Religion" was not intended to help the person who finds himself in the throes of this struggle. This may be due in part to your faith in the ultimate outcome of the conflict but it does not fulfill the second half of the commandment which enjoins working for it. Since this failure, therefore, is probably not the reason, I am led to suspect that it may be because you have not received any questions on this aspect of the problem. It is my intention, with your permission, to supply this want.

Accepting the evolutionary, rather than the static-revelationary view of religion, might we not say that religion has been developing away from superstition? Is not our identification of religion (e. g. as "legitimate magic") with superstition due to our judgment of the past by our modern standards? Does not the antagonism of religion toward magic show that religion was consistently freeing itself from what we were gradually learning to identify as superstition? (Is not the distinction between the natural and the supernatural rather modern? Is not the belief in the supernatural, in idols, devils and gods, in the past due rather to the ignorance of the times than to the nature of religion?) Do not the consistent development of the passion for righteousness and the consistent elimination of superstition prove that religion is by its very nature (though not in its perversions) a force for light rather than darkness? Is it not therefore incorrect to identify religion with superstition?

Accepting the probability of religion becoming free from superstition (as is already true, permit me to think, in the case of some individuals; and as science is said to have become), might one not say that the maxims of "the inevitability of historical processes" and "the freedom of human will," basic to Communism, partake in one form or another of the larger part of religion? (I am not trying to be "smart alecky" in implying that Communism partakes of the quality of religion.) Let us eliminate superstition and the dichotomy between things seen and unseen (natural and supernatural are merely misinterpretations of these two classes of experience). Would not the Communistic "materialism" and religious "divinity" be merely the respective propagandists' tools, manufactured out of the intellectual ore of the above-mentioned two maxims? (This without going into the question as to who did the better job.) Is not therefore the antagonism between the two due (certainly only in part, but at least) to some extent to their fundamental similarity and to the desire to monopolize the loyalty of their adherents (spirit of competition)?

Is not the largest portion of Communist antagonism to religion due to the reactionary attitude on social questions held by the religious hierarchies, especially of the Old World, which had a firm grip on the thoughts and actions of the masses? Is not therefore the Communist opposed to this use of religion rather than to religion itself? Should not Communist opposition to religion be termed opposition to institutionalized religion? Is not the opposition to religion in general, which has developed as a result of opposition to certain specific religions, an unwarranted generalization for all religions and for all time? Is not this generalization backed up by rationalizations which interpret temporary characteristics as permanent ones? Is not this confusion as to the character of religion, the cause of Communist opposition toward institutionalized religion being greater than toward institutionalized education, science, government, etc.? Is it not further true that Communism has not made similar generalizations in the case of the latter activities? Is this due to the above-mentioned desire for undivided loyalty? Is all this opposition temporary rather than fundamental?

Might not the tendency toward united fronts with religious institutions be due to something more than applying the method of boring from within? Might it not be due in some measure to a feeling which senses the weakness of the above-mentioned generalization and which sees in the acceptance of two loyalties not the weakness of divided allegiance but personal enrichment through double responsibilities? Might it also not be due to the recognition of the fact that the fundamentals of religion are more effective when taught in terms of the folk-ways which have become dear to members of a certain social group?

Finally, would Communism be opposed to the perpetration and further development of a religious tradition which continued to eliminate superstition and which preached and taught in terms of a co-operative society? Does Communism oppose the development of a religious tradition because it is an unnecessary or even harmful popularization of phi-

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losophy and aesthetics? What would be the Communist attitude toward a development of Judaism along the lines of M. M. Kaplan's "Judaism as a Civilization" or of Christianity along the lines of "Moral Man and Immoral Society"? Is the Communist disinclination to sharing loyalties due to a distrust in everybody else's sincerity?

I don't know whether these questions are worth your time or whether their answers would be in place in a magazine. In any case, here they are and, if possible, please let me know your answers to at least some of them.

New York City. A. S. H.

Religion Based on Supernatural

Earl Browder,
c/o NEW MASSES:

I read your article entitled "Communism and Religion" in the last issue of NEW MASSES. It is a foolish article. You say you welcome constructive criticism. Well, here I am.

Communists have been guilty of many grave "mistakes." I say stubborn stupidities. And the worst thing, they are slow to learn. I have no quarrel with Communism. I must criticize Communists.

I am not dealing with Czarist Russia and its church problems. I am dealing with America and her religious world, which is entirely different from old Russia.

Here in America the state and church are separated. Freedom of atheism is recognized by law equally with freedom of any and all religions. Here religion is the personal right of the individual to freedom of thought and expression. No true Communist can oppose this freedom. In fact a true Communist who understands true Communism must support it.

Communism is as old as humanity, almost; and before Marx and Lenin lived and wrote, and they happened to be atheists, Communist groups were quite often religious groups. You can't get away from this *fact.*

You have sixty million people in America organized in religious groups in the most powerful influential bodies of America. Many of these people are radical in their economic views and many ready to support economic Communism.

What is the sense of constantly insulting and irritating them in your tactical ignorance and boorishness?

You prattle of your desire of a broad, united mass front and yet do everything to make impossible a united front. What insanity obsesses you people? Or is it abject slavery on your part to higher powers that be steeped in ignorance and stupidity?

After all, what do *you* know about the force behind life and the universe? Or any other individual? And what do you know about *yourself* and particularly about your future after your so-called death? *You know nothing.* And knowing nothing it is ignorance and impudence on your part to become arrogant and dogmatic about things you are ignorant of.

I know more than you do and more than did Lenin and Marx in this particular matter, for I know that I am a spiritual being that will survive and retain personal consciousness after I leave this carnal body which will either rot or be burned up for all I care. Knowing this I speak to you as your MASTER, whether you recognize me or not. I say to you humble yourself, you ignorant fool. I say this to your leaders in Russia also, whose economic experiments I wish to see prosper. I also wish to see a higher development of character and respect for truth in Russia without which your experiment will fail.

We here in America are divided into two bodies, believers and honest disbelievers. We all alike have to live, to feed and clothe and shelter our bodies, and can and should unite economically and politically to achieve this in the fullest and quickest way. A sound economic and political platform can unite all of us regardless of belief and non-belief, *provided* we keep religious controversy out. If we are crazy enough to inject religious argument, we immediately divide up our forces to the joy of the sons of the devil. Are you instruments of the devil made stubborn and stupid to prevent humanity's unification on its common needs? It looks that way to me, no matter how many large jaw-breaking words you use to confuse the people, who should be made to understand in the simplest way the things that concern them.

If you fellows are stubborn in your ignorant atheism and denial of all spiritual life, why bless your undeveloped and blind souls, you will all wake up sometime and recognize with grief your brazen ignorance. Go ahead and form a separate atheist society and *fight* religion *upon* the *intellectual arena,* separate and apart from the political and economic arena and from the Communist Party advocacies.

In other words, *you must divorce atheism from Communism completely* and make Communism a purely economic and political proposition, and nothing else, and keep religion and anti-religion out of Communism, as is historically Communism's right. Robert Ingersoll fought religion on the educational forum and not on the political forum. So must your atheists. Unless you do so, I predict failure and suffering for you in America.

When will Communists gain wisdom and understanding and a desire for truth? You dare not publish this letter which all Communists need to read. Why don't you open up your press to honest discussion of issues?

Phoenix, Ariz. DANIEL SPEERS.

P.S.—You are at liberty to publish this letter in your press.

Comment: These two letters, different as they are, one being "arrogant and dogmatic" while the other is persuasive and logically argumentative, are yet as one in their common insistence that Communism, as an economic and political program, is not or must not be antagonistic to religion.

We print the two letters as concrete evidence of the nature of the problems dealt with in the article under criticism. To answer all the questions raised would, at this time, exceed our available space. To the first correspondent, however, we can answer briefly, that we consider supernaturalism the essence of religion and it is very difficult for us to conceive of a religion purged of this most characteristic element. Surely, such an attenuated ghost of a religion would not be such a vicious enemy of human progress as the Roman-Catholic hierarchy and perhaps would be innocuous, admitting that it could exist at all. But after all, the effective religion is not the imagining of our correspondent, but the organization of popular superstitions by the ruling class for the purpose of controlling the masses; and this is further the objective role of even the most attenuated form of religion in the idealistic philosophies. Therefore, all dreams of any fundamental reconciliation between Communism and religion are idle.

To correspondent number two, we can only again give our assurance that we really do stand for religious freedom. As he recognizes, this includes the freedom to be anti-religious. But his recognition is immediately withdrawn when he says that our irreligion will "make impossible a united front." And experience proves he is wrong. In fact, many church groups which never had joint activity in their long history, are today being brought together for social purposes through the instrumentality of the atheistic Communists. Their mutual antagonisms as rival creeds and sects are greater than their antagonism to the Communists, who have the virtue of being absolutely neutral as to the merits of their respective claims. In short, despite his vehemence, we think the gentleman is wrong.

Bread Winners

DAVID GREENHOOD

The sheriff home, his bloodhounds fed,
Thwacks his hands and cracks his bread
—Some skin is black, all blood is red—
He soaks his corns and goes to bed.

The judge is home, the sentence said.
With crabbed hands he cuts his bread
—Some skin is white, all blood is red—
He scrubs his teeth and goes to bed.

The hangman home with hanging head
Has defter thumbs to butter bread
—Some skin is black, all blood is red—
He doffs his truss and goes to bed.

Beholders at the gallows-shed
Come home with clammy hands for bread
—Some skin is white, all blood is red—
They scan their tongues and go to bed.

The undertaker's bathed the dead
With fingers washed he breaks his bread
—Some skin is black, all blood is red—
He blows his nose and goes to bed.

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Radio—the Great American Racket

LUCIEN ZACHAROFF

RADIO broadcasting is an enormous and increasingly powerful medium for mass education, propaganda, organization and entertainment. It reaches simultaneously millions of men, women and children, literate and illiterate, blind and stay-at-homes. It is on the job day and night.

What is its function today? Is it a public service utilizing those potentialities for the public good? Or is it a monopolistic combine making huge profits at the expense of millions of American workers, promoting fascism, whipping up war spirit, stressing anti-Negro discrimination, enforcing a rigid censorship of news in the interests of finance capital, politicians and demagogues, aiding in strikebreaking, ruthlessly trampling upon the rights and needs of America's children?

The control which the government exercises over broadcasting is so thorough that all substantial opposition to the Roosevelt regime is effectively suppressed. And why not? Big Business that controls broadcasting is cooperating, obviously in return for favors from governmental agencies. Two vice-presidents of the Columbia Broadcasting System are former members of the Federal Radio Commission. The C.B.S. is now holding sway over air channels worth inestimable millions of dollars. Did the two gentlemen now on its payroll have anything to do with providing it with these invaluable properties, while in the pay of the people of the United States, the rightful owners of the air channels?

When a delegation called on Henry A. Bellows, vice-president in charge of Columbia's Washington headquarters, to complain about denial of facilities for an anti-administration broadcast, it learned a couple of startling facts:

> Much to our surprise, Mr. Bellows frankly stated that no broadcast would be permitted over the C.B.S. that in any way was critical of any policy of the Administration; that the Columbia system was at the disposal of President Roosevelt and his administration, and they would permit no broadcast that did not first have his approval. We pointed out that our speakers were outstanding authorities on the subject to be covered, and nationally known, and that we were entitled to some special consideration.
>
> The only commitment we were able to get from Mr. Bellows was that if we would get permission from the President or from the Secretary of State, in writing, that they would have no objection to such a program in outlining the position of the Columbia system, stating that he felt that President Roosevelt should be supported by the C.B.S., whether right or wrong, and that inasmuch as he had complete jurisdiction over the programs he was going to see to it that no criticism of any policy or proposed policy was made over the Columbia system.

Whether right or wrong, Mr. Bellows went to Harvard with Mr. Roosevelt. So much for C.B.S.

The National Broadcasting Company web is equally intent on playing up to the administration in exchange for favors and privileges. Consider Walter E. Myers of Boston, the New England representative of the N.B.C., who was outraged when a conservative spokesman for the American Legion criticized Roosevelt's slashing of veterans' appropriations over stations WBZ in Boston and WBZA in Springfield. The criticism was not included in the manuscript which the speaker submitted to the station authorities. N.B.C.'s Mr. Myers indignantly declared that such sacrilegious words were "inimical to the national welfare" and a violation of the "rules of the game." It was further axiomatic to Mr. Myers that "as a great and powerful agency for the service of the public, these stations cannot become a party to attacks on the national security."

This sounds like something we have heard before—from Herr Goebbels of Nazi Germany.

Lundeen Bill Banned

REPEATEDLY critical analysis of the various N.R.A. features has been squelched by the self-appointed censors. The radio act specifically states that the political opponents must get equality of treatment on the air. But when Postmaster General Farley journeyed to Rochester to make a political speech over WHAM, the opposition, through skillful subterfuges, was prevented from approaching the microphones. It was not exactly a coincidence that at the time the station was seeking an enlargement of its wavelength from the government commission.

Incidentally, Farley's good man Pettey, who served as the radio man of the Democratic National Committee, was later named secretary of the Federal Radio Commission. Thus, as the Communications Act has it, is "public interest, convenience and necessity" served!

There is no graver problem facing the nation in this, the sixth year of the economic depression than social security. So pressing is the necessity for unemployment insurance that a great mass movement, gathering strength swiftly in every part of the country, resulted early in 1935 in the National Congress for Unemployment and Social Insurance in Washington. Nearly three thousand delegates represented American Federation of Labor locals, other workers' and farmers' groups, professional and white collar organizations and others.

That representative assemblage regarded the Lundeen Bill as the only adequate measure, really designed to alleviate the misery that six years of the crisis have brought in their wake. After the Congress was over, committees were set up in various states to carry on the campaign for the passage of the Lundeen Bill. As chairman of the committee on radio education for the New York Joint Action Committee for Genuine Social Insurance, the writer approached nine "independent" radio stations in New York City with the suggestion that it would be of mutual advantage to arrange for a regular period on the air, dealing with social security and related questions, such as care of maternity and childhood, health services, old-age protection. In vain did the writer stress that the work of the committee was backed in the metropolitan area alone by some 500 organizations, with a total membership of 750,000, embracing all walks of life. In vain did he speak of unqualified endorsement and active participation of the community's outstanding personalities, like Heywood Broun, Mary van Kleeck and scores of others. In vain did he adduce proof of the absorbing interest and vital importance of such programs.

Political considerations and entanglements played a decisive part in the conspiracy to ignore our proposal. A radio campaign to push a program of genuine social security would run counter to the plans of the administration with its own spurious Wagner-Lewis Bill which has been widely discredited and denounced by wage-earners and the jobless as a counterfeit designed to thwart honest efforts in this direction. Big Business and its government is inimical to any unemployment relief plan that threatens even a fraction of the profits.

So thoroughgoing is the clamp applied by politicians in the saddle that frequently other politicians, equally vicious in their anti-labor attitudes and actions, feel the effects. Recently Representative Hamilton Fish, Jr., of New York, whose Red-baiting crusade of a few years ago had branded him as an open enemy of labor and of all liberty-loving people, got a taste of his own medicine when he was kept off the air by WHN where he was scheduled to deliver a speech of severe Republican criticism of the New Deal. The refusal, as explained by the station, was due to the fact that Fish did not submit his address for inspection two days in advance. But there is no such rule of the Federal Communications Commission.

However, at that time WHN had an application pending before the commission for an increase in station broadcasting power. The station must have feared that the influence of Jim Farley and other Democratic politicians would be felt if a Republican "out" was permitted to criticize the "ins" even though both the "ins" and the "outs" are sworn foes of the working class. Station licenses come up for renewal every six months. Renewals depend on whether the

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stations live up to the politicians' notion of "public interest."

Such is the terror of political control over broadcasting. On the other hand, the Rooseveltian fireside talks periodically broadcast get right of way as well as radio speeches of other Democrats. The Democratic party is right now engaged in a campaign of radio ballyhoo in connection with the $4,880,000,000 "relief" appropriation, the purpose of which is to assist in reelecting the Democrats, and to abet Big Business and war preparations.

And while the Federal Communications Commission is prompt to rise in protest and suitable action when an attack on the administration is broadcast, it tolerates abuses like quack advertising of drugs and patent medicines over the air, advertising so repugnant, so antagonistic to the health and general welfare of the people that even the majority of capitalist newspapers long ago stopped publishing it. It tolerates, to put it mildly, the shady practices of the power trust racketeers and a thousand and one other crimes over the radio. But, while it will occasionally pass a verbal assault by some political "out," it will under no circumstances countenance genuine analysis, from the working-class standpoint, of the system that has given birth to such abuses.

Similarly, the private interests controlling radio exercise their own censorship. These commercial interests influence persons in strategic positions—Congressmen, leaders of influential civic bodies and others—by granting them broadcasting privileges. Such contacts are mutually advantageous, indeed. Will the politicians act against the evils if they expect to utilize radio in the next campaign?

Money talks and shouts down everything else in the radio racket. Elsewhere the writer has shown that newspapers do not tell the truth about it. Nor do the scores of fan magazines, business, technical and popular-scientific publications. Chains, "independent" stations and writers with commercial entanglements are responsible for most of the printed matter about radio.

Even in such a seemingly innocent arrangement as sports broadcasts a conspiracy exists to rob the audience of true facts. Last year the two baseball clubs in Chicago and the city's principal broadcasting studios reached an agreement whereby in return for "airing" the summer games, the stations would offer five free periods of advertising on the days when games were scheduled and whereby, as reported in Variety:

> Stations give the baseball clubs a guarantee that all comment on the play-by-play, the weather conditions, decisions of umpires, fights, accidents, and anything that happens within the ball park shall be favorable. No negative comment, no criticism of players or officials. . . .

If such gags are applied in the field of sports, why be surprised at the strictest imaginable censorship in the realism of politics, economics, labor relations? An editorial in The Christian Century commented:

> When considered in relation to the future of this vastly important method of mass communication, now only fourteen years old, it is significant. And the significance is not lessened by the fact that several of these stations which have thus signed away their freedom of comment over the air are owned or operated by the same newspapers which have recently been howling their heads off about the N.R.A. threat to freedom of the press.

The Church on the Air

THE Catholic Church is instrumental in keeping off the air the discussion of birth control and is equally concerned about shutting out other scientific and social problems of the day because of the threat of free intellectual intercourse to its domination of the mentality, psychology and pocketbooks of the faithful. The Catholic Church is the largest corporation in the world. Its wealth in the United States is estimated at about twenty billion dollars; largely real estate, church, school, hotel and rent-bearing residential property, all tax free. Through its priests and laymen it owns huge bank accounts, securities on margin and speculative commodities, etc.

While excluding from the air topics that it does not approve, the church is not backward about promoting its own doctrines on the ether. Its supreme gift to radio is, of course, Father Coughlin.

How thoroughgoing is the vigilance of the Catholic hierarchy over the air channels was recently (April, 1935) demonstrated when it caused sixteen Democratic and Republican members of the House of Representatives to petition the Federal Communications Commission to cancel the licenses of all the stations that broadcast a program under the supervision of the Mexican government. The petition was prompted by the objections of the Catholic weekly America and its editor, Father Wilfred Parsons. Mexico is a sore spot with the priests because of the deflated position of the church in that country and a complete separation of this superstition and ignorance-laden institution from the state and school system. Again and again religious interests have sought an official meddling in Mexican affairs by the United States Government.

The ultimate solution of the radio problem will be provided by some 18,000,000 American families whose investment in receiving sets, accessories, servicing, etc., already constitutes 90 percent of the total investment in the industry as contrasted with 10 percent invested by broadcasters.

This answer will be determined by the degree of awakening of the swindled masses to the realization of the extent of the Great American Radio Racket. It will hinge on the extent of general-opposition to the control by fascists, warmakers and profiteers. This answer will be accelerated by the understanding of the havoc radio programs are playing today with the children's minds, pouring into them steadily the poison which is certain to leave permanent effects of untold damage.

When the people of this country, whose work and money made radio possible, wake up to the simple facts that theirs is the sovereign right to the ownership of all air channels, without the permission of the power trust, capitalist press and other financial and business interests, when they decide to do something about it, they will be faced with a chaotic condition that under the most favorable circumstances, will not be rectified for a long time to come. They will have to wipe out advertising blather of radio sponsors, the censorship of private corporations, the lobbies, such as recently were instrumental on the air in defeating the Tugwell food and drug bill; at that time advertisers threatened to withdraw their appropriations for proprietary-medicine, drug and food sponsored programs if the stations did not see to it that no campaign against their products was tolerated over the air.

Freedom of thought and speech will be safeguarded so soon as a mass movement to place management of air channels where it belongs gets under way. Under these safeguards the Communist Party and other minority groups in the field of social, political and economic activity will have outlets for their views. The term "minority" is here used solely for convenience. In the opinion of the writer it is the vested interests, now in control, that are a negligible minority, conducting their sinister business and fleecing the masses for the benefit of the same handful of exploiters. In his opinion, when a great university or museum seeks to broadcast a series of educational programs, or a mass organization attempts to transmit a message of unemployment insurance, to combat war and fascism, such efforts are truly in the interests of an overwhelming majority and tend to advance the greatest good for the greatest possible number of people.

To alleviate the evils—of which but a negligible number has been mentioned—extant in radio broadcasting under the present setup and to realize at least in part the potential public benefits in the near future, the writer proposes the establishment of a Radio Federation. The Radio Federation is to function through local-action committees that will utilize mass pressure in support of the following tentative program:

1. Elimination of war, fascist and anti-labor propaganda from the air.

2. Systematic presentation of the message of real social security.

3. Protection of children against injury and exploitation by broadcasters and advertisers.

4. Broadcasts untainted by commercialism.

5. Provisions for regular educational programs for children and adults during suitable hours and through appropriate outlets.

6. Boycott of broadcasters and products of the sponsors who do not live up to the foregoing essentials of public welfare.

7. Establishment of an official organ to advance "public interest, necessity and convenience" in broadcasting.

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Be Careful, Mrs. Hopkins

NATHAN ASCH

MRS. HOPKINS at last thought she heard a noise and rose from her rocker, immobilized its movement with her hand, peeked with half-closed eyelids at the floor searching for stray lint, dragged her feet to the curtained window and again peered out through the torn lace fabric. A car had stopped in the outside alley. She turned and her eyes quite closed against the bare electric light, she stood in the direction of the door. There came Miss Wurdman's three imperative knocks, there came the click sharp turning of the knob and Miss Wurdman came. Miss Wurdman's voice was hurried and suddenly cold with apprehension, Mrs. Hopkins thought that there was anger in Miss Wurdman's voice. Miss Wurdman said: "I'm late. And I would have let it go, but I was forced to see you, Mrs. Hopkins." Mrs. Hopkins imagined Miss Wurdman wore a wrap and an evening gown, but the naked bulb always hurt her eyes and she did not dare to shade her face from it and look. She waited, breathless. Miss Wurdman said: "Mrs. Hopkins, we've had complaints about you from our other clients. Mrs. Hopkins, I'm going to be very firm with you." Mrs. Hopkins heard her own sharply exhaled breath. "Mrs. Hopkins, you can't afford to buy it and you know you bought last week three pounds of butter." Mrs. Hopkins' heart loudly began to beat, she felt heavy and she imagined she was going to fall. She heard the hiss and whistle of her own voice: "Miss Wurdman, I didn't buy no butter." Miss Wurdman's voice became very high; it hissed like Mrs. Hopkins' voice. "I'm not going to argue with you, Mrs. Hopkins. We've been doing for you everything we could. And here we receive a letter you've been buying butter." Mrs. Hopkins repeated: "I didn't buy no butter." From the outside there came toot-toot and Miss Wurdman said: "This is after my office hours, Mrs. Hopkins, and if I wasn't feeling sorry for you, I would have simply recommended that we stop relief." Mrs. Hopkins became very, very cold, she began trembling and she couldn't stop. She tried to move forward, to beg Miss Wurdman with her hand, to fall before the young lady on her knees, but she couldn't move. She couldn't even speak very well; she couldn't control her loosely shaking head; and slowly she repeated: "I—didn't—buy—no—butter." Miss Wurdman almost lost her temper. "We know you did. Your own grocer wrote us. He said he couldn't afford to give his own family that amount of butter. And he pays taxes, Mrs. Hopkins, for the support of clients like you." Now Mrs. Hopkins couldn't even speak; all she could feel was her crazily-shaking head and the line of electric light in her half-closed eyes. "When we can't trust our clients, Mrs. Hopkins, we begin to suspect everything they want. There is even a question now of allowing you the visits to the dentist." All Mrs. Hopkins could say was weakly: "Oh-h-h."—"What we cannot imagine, Mrs. Hopkins, is where you found the money, since your budget is only $2.80 a week. Maybe your son came back and you kept the news from us." Mrs. Hopkins' lungs suddenly caught some air, the words came with an awful rush. "No, Harry ain't come back. I ain't heard from him in almost two years. Maybe he's somewhere on the road. Maybe he's sick. I don't know, Miss Wurdman." From the outside there came an impatient this time triple toot and Mrs. Hopkins desperately hurried with her words. "You can't stop relief. I didn't buy no butter. I hardly eat anything at all. I ain't lit the stove in almost two weeks. What would I be doing with a lot of butter? I sit here and I wait for the postman and I think maybe I'll hear from Harry." Now from the outside the toot-toot began evenly and persistently repeating and Miss Wurdman said in a leaving voice: "Well, Mrs. Hopkins, we'll investigate. You're not to worry if you told the truth. Maybe someone did make a mistake and I'll be the first one to come and tell you so. Goodby, Mrs. Hopkins, you will hear from us." The toot still continued and Miss Wurdman left; then all at once everything was quiet. From the outside came the slamming of a door, came the sound of a motor starting, quieter and disappearing as it left the alley for the street beyond. Mrs. Hopkins slowly dragged her feet into the little kitchen, shut the door behind her, for a moment stood opening her eyes to the resting darkness. Her hand lifted to a little shelf, her fingers felt the wood, crept to the side, touched the sudden coolness of an earthenware jar, lifted the paper that was covering it and sank in the well-spooned butter.

She rubbed her fingers for a while in it, then put them into her mouth and sucked them between her toothless gums.

Seed and Stubble

LOLA PERGAMENT

Bewildered now he lifts above the land
his face long martyred to the wind and frost;
years have availed no peace into his hand,
hours have been his timeless holocaust.

Denied by earth and her invisible store
that time will stake against the want of him,
he feels a fitful hunger that will bore
like spring entombed within the barren limb.

What dream deceived his flesh that he come to this?
What prayer beset his mind with such confusion?
Earth, that had once returned a lover's kiss,
is now his poverty and disillusion.

Into a wilderness and stubborn track
his fathers built the coffers of his need;
the tree that was a shelter broke a back,
starvation nourished in the planted seed.

And there were times when drouth unsexed the earth
and parched the womb that strove and could not yield;
but there were times when labor reaped its worth
as plentiful as grain upon a field.

Bewildered now he lifts his head, unknowing
all but the heartbreak of his meagre ration;
where stubble rots the corn silk should be blowing
its peace into his singular starvation.

Out of a heritage his plough lies rusted,
his field unfurrowed and given back to sheep,
and he, an alien to the land he trusted,
stands on a grave wherein he cannot sleep.

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Labor's Dividends Under the New Deal

A Record of Workers Killed in the Past Six Months

Date	*Name*	*Place*	*Circumstances of the Killing*
Feb. 3	Columbus ("Pink") Walker	Rossville, Ga.	Walker was an unemployed man, a sympathizer of the United Textile Workers of America. He was shot by a scab, Talmadge Lindsey, during a strike at the Richmond Hosiery Mills.
Feb. 14	Frank Petrosky	Larksville, Pa.	Petrosky was a coal miner, a member of the United Anthracite Miners Union. He was killed by a scab in a strike at the Woodward Colliery of the Glen Alden Coal Company.
Feb. 14	Valentine Rascavage	Hanover Township, Pa.	Rascavage was a member of the United Mine Workers of America, and was killed in a quarrel about leadership of the strike then going on.
Feb. 17	Paul Knight of Santa Maria, Calif.	El Centro, Calif.	Killed by vigilantes during a strike of lettuce workers under the leadership of the Fruit and Vegetable Workers Union, A. F. of L. Scene of the killing was the William Wahl shed.
Feb. 17	Kenneth Eldridge Hamaker of Westmoreland, Calif.	El Centro, Calif.	Killed at same time and under same circumstances as Paul Knight.
March 18	Abraham Young, Negro	Sladen, Mass.	Young was an organizer among the share-croppers. He was threatened by Hardie Mackie, an agent of the landlords, who pulled out a gun. Young shot in self-defense and was lynched.
March 20	James Thompson, Negro	New York City	Shot by Detective Nicholas Campo, during the police terror that swept Harlem when the Negro people rose in resentment against their long-accumulated grievances.
March 22	August Miller	New York City	Died of a fractured skull suffered at the hands of police during the Harlem events of March 19.
March 23	Andrew Lyons, Negro	New York City	Died of internal injuries received during the Harlem events of March 19.
March 24	Edward Laurie, Negro	New York City	Killed by Policeman Abraham Zabutinski, on the excuse that he had "talked back." This was part of the police reign of terror established in Harlem.
April 4	Ignacio Velarde	Gallup, New Mexico	Unemployed veteran, killed in the fire of the sheriff and his deputies during a workers' demonstration against the eviction of unemployed miners.
April 12	Solomon Esquibel	Gallup, New Mexico	A member of the Section Committee of the Communist Party. Died in the hospital as the result of wounds received on April 4, when Velarde was killed.
April 17	Andy Latiska of Port Arthur, Ohio	Toronto, Ohio	Killed when guardsmen poured 100 shots into the crowd of strikers at the Kaul Clay Company. Strike was led by the United Clay Workers Union.
April 21	Edris Mabie	Springfield, Ill.	Member of the Progressive Miners of America. Killed by a gang including Ray Edmondson, President of the United Mine Workers of America in Illinois.
April 27	Ray Morencey	Stockton, Calif.	Was vice-president of the local warehouseman's union. Killed by Charles Gray, son of the owner of the trucking company where the union had called a strike.
May 11	Fonie Stephens	La Grange, Ga.	Injured by National Guards who were evicting strikers from the company houses. Died in hospital as result of these injuries.
June 14	John W. Duster	Omaha, Nebraska	Killed by police fire during the strike of streetcar men.
June 14	George Melhelm	Canton, Ohio	Died in hospital from injuries received when struck by tear-gas bomb fired by Republic Steel Company guards during the strike at the Berger Manufacturing Company.
June 17	Dewey McCoy	Omaha, Nebraska	Died as a result of injuries inflicted June 14 by police during strike of streetcar men.
June 21	W. H. Kaarte	Eureka, Calif.	Killed in attack by police, with riot guns and tear gas, at Holmes-Eureka Mill where lumber workers were on strike.
June 24	Thomas Wilstrom, Negro	New York City	Died in Bellevue Hospital as result of fractured skull inflicted by police during Harlem events of March 19.
June 25	Harold Edlund	Eureka, Calif.	Shot in same attack of police on the lumber workers that killed W. H. Kaarte. Died in hospital.

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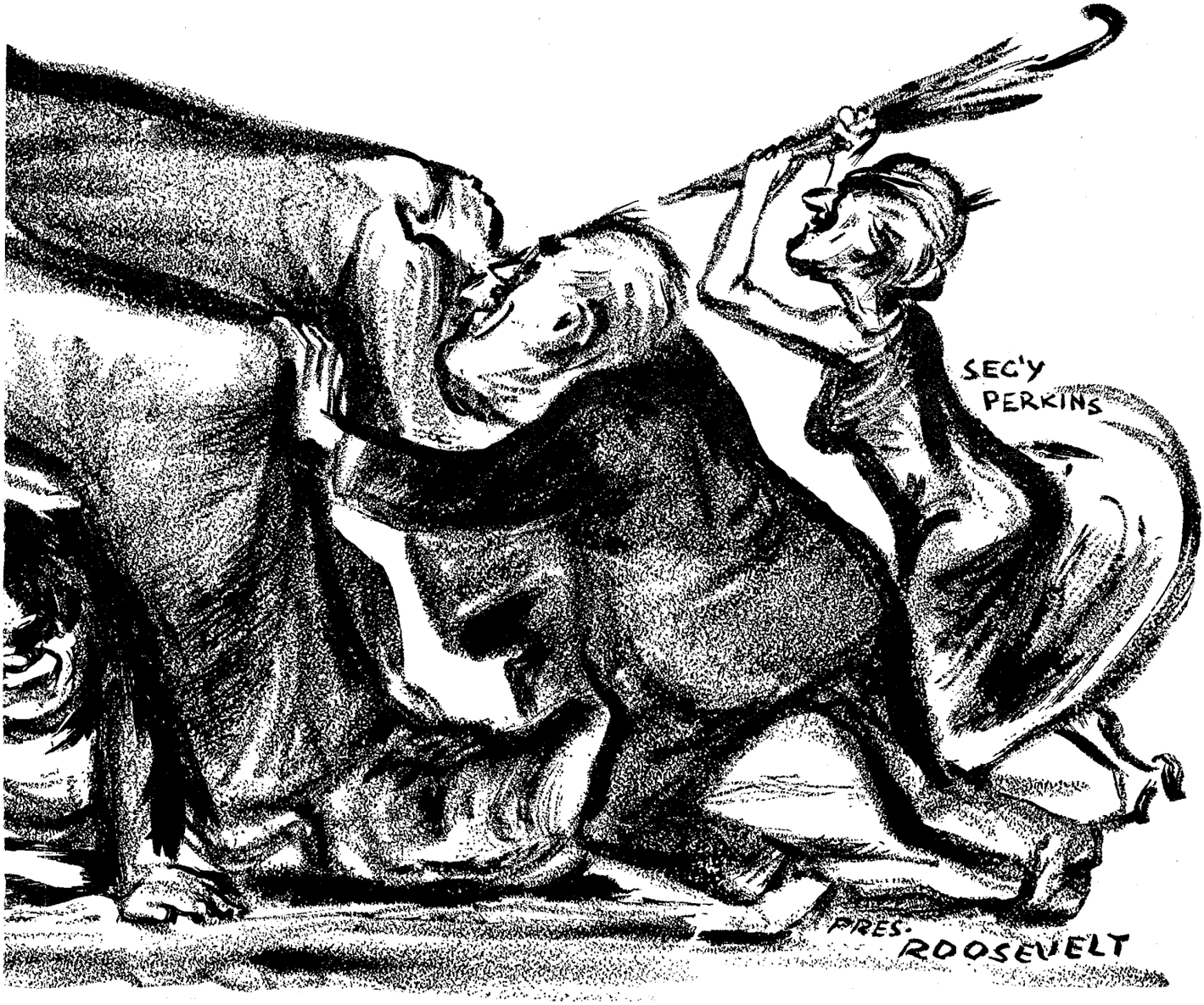

Jacob Burck

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The Depression Generation

M. B. SCHNAPPER

(The Second Youth Congress, now meeting in Detroit to deal with conditions described in the following article, is discussed in the editorial section.)

YOUTH the world over is today far from being served, it is being disinherited; deprived of education, uprooted from normal social life, denied the very right to function in society.

The essential meaning and means of existence, a social and economic status, is beyond the grasp of an entire generation crushed beneath the debris of a crumbling economic system. More and more youth but less and less need for them—that is the tragic present and future of the world-depression generation. The present indeed hardly exists for youth. For the present will have nought to do with them; they are the present's surplusage. Industry, hardly able to absorb the old, will have none of the new. Wherefore puny new fingers when productivity has increasingly less use for human fingers of any kind.

According to the official estimates of the International Labor Office—conservative estimates, of course, but nonetheless valuable—seven million or about one-fourth of the world's twenty-five million unemployed are young persons. (The actual number of unemployed youth is probably several times as high, as is the probable real figure of total world unemployment; there are five million unemployed young persons in the United States alone according to Prof. Mark May of Yale University and recent A.F. of L. estimates put the total U. S. unemployment at about twelve million.) The following table, a marked understatement of the actual situation, is significant because the figures are officially admitted:

Country	Date	Unemployed Young Persons	Percentage of Total Unemployment
Czechoslovakia	1933	113,470	23%
Denmark	1933	36,270	28%
Finland	1933	15,510	33%
Germany	1934	507,865	19%
Great Britain	1931	683,780	30%
Hungary	1930	92,655	42%
Italy	1932	386,655	41%
Netherlands	1933	56,165	28%
Norway	1933	20,000	27%
Sweden	1933	57,410	34%
Switzerland	1934	7,270	15%
United States	1930	681,930	27%

Damning as these figures are, they far from reveal the real extent of youth unemployment. None of the figures is up to date. The statistics concerning unemployed youth begin at different ages in different countries, ranging from fourteen to eighteen years, and stop at different ages in different countries, ranging from eighteen to twenty-five. The figures supplied by most countries include only certain groups of youth. Significantly enough, the Italian and German figures include only those young persons registered at public employment exchanges or unemployment insurance offices; the majority of young persons are, of course, not registered at these bureaus since they are not eligible for public works employment or unemployment insurance benefits. Despite this discrepancy Italy still has the second highest percentage of unemployed youth. Germany's comparatively small percentage is explained by the fact that young persons enrolled in labor service—about 220,000 in all—are not considered unemployed at all.

Nor are these figures or, for that matter, the actual number of unemployed youth normal for such a serious crisis as the present. Had it not been for the World War and its concomitant birth decrease the real number of unemployed young persons would perhaps today be twice as high. The war-time birth decrease reduced the otherwise probable young workers by over 2,000,000 in Germany, about 1,100,00 in France and about 865,000 in Great Britain. Shortly after the war some economists hailed this bitter phenomenon; predicting that the birth decrease would result in the non-existence of unemployment between 1930 and 1935; one rash scholar prophesied a shortage of labor during those years. (But while the war-time birthrate drop kept down the number of unemployed youths during the last few years, the abnormal post-war increase of birthrate will mean an abnormal increase of young labor during the next few years.)

An examination of the composition of the youth unemployment reported by the twelve nations listed reveals that young persons form a higher percentage of total unemployment among women than among men, particularly in Germany, Great Britain, Italy and the United States—a situation due principally to the fact that there are more youthful persons among women workers than among men. Not unconnected, however, is the nature of fascism and its feudal attitude toward women with the extremely high unemployment of young women in Italy and Germany; in Germany in 1933 unemployment among young women constituted 36 percent of female unemployment while in Italy in 1932 unemployment among young women was 57 percent of total female unemployment. And the problem is equally serious in the United States, for according to the 1930 U. S. census young women constituted 41 percent of the total unemployed females while young men composed only 23 percent of the total unemployed males.

Unemployment has been highest for both sexes among the older young persons, those between eighteen and twenty-five, than among those between twelve and eighteen. The latter category, the source of cheap juvenile labor, has indeed been drawn upon more and more during the past few years while vast numbers of adult workers have been thrown out of employment and older youngsters practically barred from any type of employment. An official British committee noting this tendency in 1926 declared that in many industries "it is the younger adult workers, those of from eighteen to twenty-four years of age, who are least in demand." The British census of 1931 found 542,357 unemployed in the eighteen-twenty-four age group and only 141,424 unemployed in the fourteen-seventeen age group. America's record, as usual, is far worse. While 414,683 Americans between twenty and twenty-four went jobless in 1930, 17 percent of the total unemployment, about 350,000 children between ten and fourteen were being absorbed by industry; only 2,459 youngsters between ten and fourteen were reported as unemployed.

Intense exploitation at paltry wages is the common lot of working children throughout the world. It is precisely because they can be exploited more and paid less that they are preferred to regular workers and young adult workers. Child labor is, of course, highest in occupations involving routine or menial work, particularly in textile industries, confectionery manufacture, canneries and agriculture. But the value of child labor invariably ends near the eighteenth birthday, when the limbs are no longer supple, when the body begins to require more food and a higher subsistence wage. Industry's child workers are then dumped onto the scrap heap of unemployed youth.

Out of this human scrap heap, the nations of the world are today moulding the cannon fodder of tomorrow. In Germany, in Italy, in Great Britain, in the United States, in Austria—wherever capitalism may be found—the young unemployed are being put to good martial account. Military labor camps spread across the face of the earth. Not uniforms but iron discipline and endless training turn out soldiers in these camps. In the United States, Great Britain, Czechoslovakia—nations still vauntingly democratic—the young are conscripted by propaganda; in Germany, Bulgaria and Danzig they are conscripted by decree.

Youth's will to be served will decide the future. Once it fully realizes that its conditions can never be bettered by capitalism, that it must indeed serve and slave for capitalism, then youth's will to be served may result in the disinheritance of the system which now seeks to disinherit it.

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Farm in Alaska

SANORA BABB

IT WAS so strange to her that they should be getting ready to move to a *foreign land.* Lon didn't say much about it, he had just made up his mind when the time came and told her they were going. He said, "A man can't earn a living in this country any more, Julie, and I figured we might as well take a chance, before we starve to death." Her heart was beating so hard that she was afraid to speak and Lon was looking stubborn, looking away from her. He said, "And the kids ain't been in school. No telling when they'll open up that schoolhouse again." No telling. She thought she ought to say something. "I guess they'll send a lot of us together. It won't be so bad like going alone."

"No," he said. "They say it's a good country, where we can raise something. If it ain't they've sure got rid of us."

"Well, I don't know where to start, we've been in this house so many years," she said. He went out and she took the tablet from the dish safe and started to write letters to her sisters in Texas and her brother in Utah. The paper was yellowed. She didn't write more than three or four times a year. She wrote a letter to Lon's brother's wife in Nebraska and asked her if they could take care of Lon's father. "He's seventy-one," she wrote, "and pretty spry, but he's done so much heavy work all his life his back has gone bad. He can do a little work around the farm, if you don't give him anything to lift. He won't eat much." She read the letter through and the word *Alaska* thrust itself out of the page in a terrible aching realization. "We are moving to Alaska," she read half aloud, "We are moving to Alaska." There was a hard pain in her eyes and throat and her face was rigid with not weeping. She wrote on the end of the letter: "Maybe you could drive over here for a day or two before we go." When the letters were finished, she began to walk around in the house, pulling out drawers, poking into top shelves, looking in boxes under the beds, seeing things she had forgotten for years. But she didn't do anything about them yet; she didn't know where to start. And old Dad had come in. It was time to get supper. He was sitting by the window cutting his chewing tobacco into the palm of his hand to put in his pipe. It was hard to afford any tobacco now and certainly not two kinds, but smoking was the only pleasure he had. It was hard to cook too with so little. Would they have sugar in their coffee in Alaska? She looked at the old man and wondered when she ought to tell him. He was talking to himself, then he started sucking on the pipe and was silent. The strong smell came up around her, but she was used to it and smoking was his only pleasure. Maybe he wouldn't have that long, maybe there wouldn't be the money. . . .

Alma came in with a few eggs. The chickens were so poor they couldn't lay. The two little boys came in and went out again to the barn to help Lon. She didn't know what they did all the time, not going to school and not having any crops coming on this harvest. Alma was fifteen. She had wanted to go to high school in town this year, but they could not send her. She had been going to the eighth grade two years just to be in school, but the school was closed now. *Alaska.* That young Naylor boy had been going with Alma and wanted to marry her, only he was too poor now, they wouldn't even have a piece of land. His folks weren't going to Alaska, they were too old, and he had to stay and help them the best he could. She never talked to the girl much about things like that, but she would have to tell her, before Lon blurted it out. Alma had a hope chest with a few pillow cases and quilts in it. The girl started to stir up the corn bread for supper and she was standing close to her mother now, so that she could tell her if she wanted to. Alma looked at the meat her mother was slicing.

"Sow belly and corn bread . . . corn bread and sow belly," she said.

"Look in the cellar," her mother said, "and see if we can spare a jar of fruit for supper. Don't take it if there ain't enough for Sunday. Maybe there's a jar of pickles left."

"Fruit is to pickles as . . ." the girl went out. When she came back with the pickles, her mother said, "What's that you said?"

"Nothing. . . . I was just thinking how I know that eighth grade arithmetic by heart, and how I never been to a town school and now I have to go to Alaska where I'll never see anybody I know!" Her mother looked up and was going to speak if she could think what to say.

Alma went over to the old man and raised her voice.

"Grandpa!"

"Hush!" her mother said too low for him to hear. The old man knew about Alaska. He had heard all the men talking about going. He kept on smoking as if he hadn't heard. Alma came back to the stove.

"I heard you and papa! You never said a *word.* When I'm married, I'll talk back. But maybe I'll never get another chance to get married."

"Maybe Chuck can come there later. You can write letters. Maybe you can come back as soon as he can take care of you."

"When his folks die, you mean, when I'm an old woman."

"We can make a living there, daughter, we have to go. Your father is doing all he can. You're a big enough girl to know that."

"Oh, I know it, mama. Corn bread and sow belly. We used to have some good stuff to eat a long time ago." She began to put the plates on the table. The boys came in with their father. They were excited.

"Pop says we get a ride on a boat," Eddie said. They looked at the table before they began to wash their hands.

"Maybe we'll get something good to eat up there too," Carl said seriously.

"Maybe," Alma said.

"Alma don't want to leave Chuck," Eddie said with some disgust.

"Now son," the father said looking at Alma closely, "you tend to your own horses and Alma will tend to hers."

"Alaska's a mighty cold country," the old man said suddenly as if he had been thinking about it for a long time. "Nothing but snow and Eskimos up there." He kept turning the fat meat around in his fingers looking for a strip of lean, then he put it back on his plate and cut it into pieces. "You'll have to eat raw fish and blubber." They all smiled a little and shook their heads: they had just found it wasn't all like that. The old man looked at them and down again to his plate.

"Hearsay," he muttered. Julie and Lon ate without speaking again and the new country rose up in their thoughts with the reality of their going. Alaska was only a name they had seen in a geography years ago. It wasn't any part of America to them. They had never thought of America before. They couldn't remember even speaking the word, but now the sound of America was swelling and tearing in the woman like a birth: the new emotion of possession, the slow heavy pain and the loss. And wasn't it strange that they had to leave America? That something was so wrong that all these farmers were being sent away? Was America so full, so crowded that there were no other farms for them to go to? Didn't a lot of foreigners come to America because there was so much room, so much money? It wasn't just the drouth. All the farmers knew that. She looked at Lon and the questions were leaping up in her mind, but lying unspoken in her throat. He saw the worry on her face and he said in himself, "She'll be homesick."

When some of the neighbors came in for a farewell gathering, there was only coffee to give them, but the women who could brought a cake or a pie and it was like a party, except for the secret sadness. Lon's brother and his wife had come from Nebraska to take the old man home with them. All the men were together talking and the women were sitting in the kitchen talking. The boys and girls were outside eating cake and Alma had walked away into the dusk waiting for Chuck. She couldn't even tell him how she felt and it wouldn't do any good anyway, there was nothing he could do about them now. She could

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see the light in the old man's pipe going bright, then dark, then bright again. He was sitting on the front porch alone. She saw Chuck come out of the kitchen door, around the house and past the old man.

"Are you going, grandpa?" the boy asked him.

"I'm too old; the government ain't got no use for an old man in a place like that. I proved-up one government claim in Colorado. I lived alone there seven, maybe eight years, dry-farming, but she's gone now," he waved his pipe in a futile gesture. "Lost to taxes." He began to smoke in a way that excluded the boy. Alma came up and they walked away and sat down in an old wagon seat in the yard.

"You going to write to me, Alma?"

"Yes," she said, and it was very hard to speak.

"I've been talking to your dad about you coming back in a year or two, when . . ."

"What did he say?"

"He says you can."

"Maybe it won't be any different," she said, and turned away crying. "I'd stay . . . this way."

"No," he said. "We'd be too poor—worse than poor." She leaned against him, wanting to speak of the things that hurt her, and he wanted to speak of the years ahead.

"Something will happen," he said. "The farmers . . ."

"But *us*," she said. *"Us?"* There was a strange heavy sound some place in the dark. They listened a moment, but there was nothing more and they returned to themselves.

The people were leaving, going by the road on the other side of the house. The boy and girl waited quietly, then they went toward the house. The old man had gone from the front porch, but when they came nearer, Alma saw him lying on the ground almost buried in the dark.

"Grandpa!" Alma was afraid to look at him and she ran around the house calling her mother and father. They all came, the little boys frightened and silent, and Chuck was lifting him up, carrying him into the house. When he walked by the lighted window, they saw the old man's eyes alive and the queer, hesitant life in his face. Chuck laid him on the bed and the old man looked at him and he seemed to be listening.

"Dad, what's the matter? Tell us what's the matter," Lon said, gently, going close to him, the tears running down his face. "He's paralyzed," he said to the others. "It's a stroke." He took hold of the old man's shoulders. "Dad, can you hear me?" and he bent close if the old man should whisper. He only looked back at him steadily and the terrible effort to speak was on his immovable face, but no sound came.

"I'll get a doctor from town," Chuck said. Julie followed him out.

"We can't pay a doctor," she said. "But we have to have one. Tell him that, Chuck, that we can't pay now."

"I'll tell him," he said. "He'll come."

Her sister-in-law had come out of the house and they stood together in the yard wondering what to do until the doctor came.

"He'll be dead before you go," she said. "We'll stay and help you take care of him."

"All this leaving has brought it on," Julie said. "We'll have to leave anyway. We can't lose out on this bunch they're sending. We can't wait. It's our only chance to make a living now."

"If he'd die tonight and the doctor don't come," the sister-in-law said, "we could bury him here on the farm."

"It would cost a lot, but he ought to be decently buried."

"Yes, poor old man, he can't even be buried."

"He sees and hears everything. I'll put some of the things back in the room tomorrow so he'll think we're not going.

"Charlie can sit up tonight," the sister-in-law said, speaking of her husband, and they started back to the house.

"Maybe the doctor can't come," Julie said. "Maybe he'll die tonight."

Correspondence

The Actors Win

To The New Masses:

The growing class-consciousness of actors—one of the major explanations of the inclusion by the F.E.R.A. of a theatre project—has won a major victory for the rank and file. The Actors Equity last month passed a ruling that members are to receive $20 a week (junior members $15 a week) for living costs during the rehearsal periods. In 1924, when the subject was first broached, the demand was deemed so "revolutionary" that one lone member voted for it. But now the Actors Forum group within the Equity has organized a strong rank-and-file leadership. This group wrote the bill, pressed it and secured its passage. The president of the Equity, Mr. Gilmore, originally opposed the bill, but when he saw the rising power of the rank and file, he switched his position and even made a gesture toward liberalism by attending the Unemployed Council. The Forum has struggles ahead: the most immediate is to do away with the differential between senior and junior minimum pay. Already it has forced through the provision that only two members out of ten in a cast may be junior members of Equity. The Forum's effectiveness has been proved; in the coming season it can expect even more wholehearted support of its platform.

New York City. Henry Walters.

American Artist Framed in Cuba

To The New Masses:

Beys Afroyim, an American artist vacationing in Cuba, was gathering material for his book *Cuba as Seen by an Artist* when he was arrested on charges of "trying to overthrow the Cuban government." Afroyim, like many artists who have traveled abroad, was basing his book on first-hand observation of the people and conditions off the beaten path.

The only evidence against him was his photographs and sketches, but this was enough to fling him into a Havana dungeon.

The purpose behind this frame-up, as New Masses readers will realize, is the Mendieta-Batista government's fear of widespread dissemination of facts that reveal its repression of the labor movement in particular and the masses in general.

Afroyim's health is failing rapidly. His very life is threatened by prolonged stay in the Havana dungeon. We call upon New Masses readers to help us in our fight to free him. Protests addressed to Edwin C. Wilson, Chief of the Division of Latin-American Affairs, Washington, D. C., will help toward saving the life of this latest victim of the Cuban terror. The Artists' Union.

60 West 15th St., New York.

From John Ujich

To The New Masses:

The decision of the Board of Review of the Labor Department to hand me over to butcher Mussolini is nothing more than the scheme used by Hitler who places the gun in the hands of imprisoned workers of Germany so to make the world believe that they have committed suicide after they have been murdered by Nazis.

May I ask the gentlemen of that board what they based their decision on and if they will come and take their mask of Hearst off and tell the people of America what crime I committed on which they based their deportation. I challenge them, I dare them to do that.

For thirty years I thought I was an American. Several times I was urged by "law and order" of my home town of Ruston, Washington, to place my name in the race for City Councilman. And now after thirty years of toil in the mills, mines and smelters of America, Miss Perkins with one stroke of a pen sentences me to death in the fascist hands of Mussolini, branded as an "alien." All this without any procedure of the court whatsoever. The very first attempt to frame me by the "law and order" was met with reverse by jury who has known my character for fifteen long years.

Yet I have a wider scope of grand jury to lay my case before. I want to tell the Working Class of this country why the gentlemen from the Department of Labor are so anxious to hand me over to Mussolini.

My only crime consists of my objection to the standard of living of $1.50 per week, which was imposed upon the unemployed workers in the city of Tacoma. The Relief Department was headed by Mr. A. B. Comfort and Mr. Priest, who are now indicted for misapplication of Federal and State funds amounting to *twenty-seven million dollars.* It is interesting to know that the two mentioned gentlemen are at liberty on $1,000 and $1,500 bonds respectively, while John Ujich who dared to protest against the starvation of $1.50 per week is again for the third time in three years thrown into prison, back to physical and mental torture and held on $2,095 bonds at the instigation of the above two named gentlemen of Tacoma, Washington.

Adding an insult to an already inflicted injury, this Board of Review in the Labor Department resorts to the same method of yesterday's horror of Pilsudski, who forced his victims to dig their own graves before they were shot down by a firing

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squad. They offer me self-deportation, (voluntary departure), and this without providing one red bean for my ticket. "Forced voluntary departure" within thirty days.

So this is my compensation for the thirty years of my youthful days in the mills, mines and logging camps of the Northwest since I was sixteen years of age.

If Judas betrayed an innocent man, at least he had a conscience and hung himself, while Mr. A. B. Comfort is walking the streets at liberty and the Pilates at Washington are trying to wash their hands while I am being punished for their crimes in Ellis Island.

JOHN UJICH.

U. S. Marine Hospital, Ellis Island.

Case of John Montjoy

TO THE NEW MASSES:

The attention of your readers is called to the case of John Montjoy, Negro youth of Covington, who has been sentenced to be hanged on an alleged charge of rape and whose hope lies in widespread petition on the part of liberals and others who are concerned in the securing of justice and equal rights for Negroes.

An investigation conducted by a committee of representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union, The International Labor defense and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People reveals the following in the case:

(1) Negroes are and have been excluded from the jury panel.

(2) The alleged confession of the accused was obtained 7 days after arrest at 3:30 in the morning, under circumstances strongly indicating that the defendant's charge of duress and coercion is true.

(3) Although the police had the opportunity for submitting the woman to an immediate medical examination after the alleged act, no such examination was made.

(4) The court-appointed defense counsel presented no evidence of any kind in defense, not even putting the defendant on the stand.

On the above facts the committee bases its appeal for support in a campaign to secure reversal of the conviction and a new trial, which is now before the Court of Appeals. Prompt action in the form of petition, letters and telegrams is earnestly requested of those persons interested in this matter. All such communications should be sent to Judge Rogers Clay, Kentucky Court of Appeals, Frankfort, Ky.

(SIGNED)

The American Civil Liberties Union
MARY D. BRITE,
Secretary, Cincinnati Branch.
GEORGE A. HEDGER,
Chairman, Cincinnati Branch.
The International Labor Defense
EDWARD LEAVITT,
Acting Secretary, Cincinnati Branch.
The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
JAMES T. WHITNEY,
Cincinnati. Secretary, Cincinnati Branch.

Rabener Being Tested

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I am told that Johann Rabener's novel, *Condemned to Live,* has just been proscribed by the Nazi government in Germany. This significant action was taken shortly after the publication of the book in the United States and only a week before my review of it apeared in THE NEW MASSES.

I am of course pleased that I stated in my review that we cannot yet form a definite judgment of Rabener and his work. The reader will recall, I hope, my statement that Rabener's mentality is essentially that of the young Nazi intellectual, but that he is honest, able and endowed with the instinct of an artist. Such qualities are in contradiction to fascism and I suggested that he stands at the crossroads. He must either go forward or backward—"forward" signifying growth in understanding and therefore in opposition to Hitlerism; "backward" signifying no more than a failure to grow and therefore a complete surrender to the Nazi psychosis. The crisis in his career has come much sooner than I anticipated.

It is a little difficult to explain why the book was proscribed. In most respects it is thoroughly representative of the Nazi temper and it was properly greeted with acclamation by the critics. But then, the critics were not necessarily alive to all of the curious demands of the politicians; perhaps they were carried away by the mere fact that a readable and often powerful novel had at last appeared out of the arid soil of the Third Reich. Did the Storm Troopers clamp down because Rabener was once friendly with the Jewish Jacob Wassermann? Because he had been praised by the exile Thomas Mann? Because one Jewish girl in the book is sympathetically portrayed? Because the story ends in gloom and horror? The latter is most likely, for the Nazi officials are particularly vociferous in their plea for an optimistic, courageous and idealistic art—a literature that could match the literature of the Soviet Union. As if the Nazis can generate optimism and idealism. The principal thing to Rabener's credit, I insisted in my review, is that he is honest. He presented the German middle-class youth for what they were at the time of the scene of the story.

His integrity is now being tested. Will he purge himself and be blessed with the kiss of Goebbels? It will be interesting to watch him, for it is interesting to see whether a genuine (though naive and morbid) talent can survive the pressure of fascism. May I be permitted the prediction that it cannot?

BERNARD SMITH.

Earl Browder's Articles

TO THE NEW MASSES:

The series of articles now running in THE NEW MASSES by Earl Browder we believe to be a landmark in the history of radical journalism in this country. Doubtless you plan to issue them all in a single volume and certainly it is important to do so. But we wish to suggest and to suggest urgently that one of the articles, namely, "Americanism—Who Are the Americans?" be issued separately in a one-cent pamphlet, and not cease to be printed until the homely good sense of the words therein become household words from coast to coast. This article, though probably not the "best" or the most important of the series from the point of view of schooled Marxists, is nevertheless the most necessary of those printed so far to meet the prevalent provincial, nationalistic and potentially fascistic attitude widespread in this country. And particularly that of workers and farmers whom any one whose travels are greater than from the Battery to the Bronx knows are remaining untouched by revolutionary pamphlets so far published for their enlightenment.

Make a penny pamphlet of "Who Are the Americans?" and within a year there will be not only many more class-conscious Americans than there are now, but many, many, more who will be articulately aware of what it's all about.

MARIAN A. KLOPFER, JENNY SCOTT, JOSEPH GOLLOMB, LOUISE BREWSTER, JOHN Z. THOMPSON, HERMAN J. NORTH, CLARENCE HILL.

Letters in Brief

A contest for a one-act play on Angelo Herndon is being conducted by the New Theatre League in conjunction with the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners. David Kinkead, of the National Committee, writes: "The internationally famous incident of Herndon leading a protest demonstration of Negro and white workers for increased relief is to be the central theme. Although the use of this incident need not be absolutely literal, Herndon's actions and their enormous significance should be the heart of the play." The contest opened July 1 and ends Oct. 1. It is sponsored by Opportunity Magazine and the Negro Liberator. An award of $50 will be given and the winning play will be published in New Theatre and performed early in November by New Theatre groups. Rules of the contest, as well as material on Herndon's case, may be obtained from the National Committee, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

The Theatre Section of the American League Against War and Fascism writes that it is anxious to have short plays "against the increasing dangers of these menaces" for fall production. Manuscripts should be addressed to the Theatre Section of the American League Against War and Fascism, 213 Fourth Avenue, New York.

Frankness characterizes the letter of Al Wilkie, of Paramount, in explaining why Peter Ellis can't have press tickets to see Paramount pictures. Mr. Wilkie writes: "Although I am not a regular reader of THE NEW MASSES, on every occasion that I did glance through your publication I found definitely unfavorable reviews of our pictures. Naturally I do not expect any critic to like all the pictures; by the same reasoning I do not expect any critic to dislike all of them. When our pictures consistently bat O-O-O in your rating, I am certain that your reviews are not helping our pictures at the box-office."

A copy of a letter sent by the District Committee of the Communist Party, Northwest District, to E. Luther, Continental Committee on Technocracy, Seattle, Wash., has been forwarded to us. It pledges the Communist Party's "support in your campaign against the dismissal of Dean Tyler for his political activity on behalf of Technocracy." The letter says elsewhere: "The action of President Sieg (of the University of Washington) follows on the dismissal of Granville Hicks from the Rensselear Polytechnic Institute at Troy, N. Y., similarly for no expressed reason, but in reality for also participating in political activity—in this case as a Communist. . . . The question involved is the question of academic freedom, and the right of professors to participate in political activity."

The Harriet Tubman Improvement Club, of Seattle, Wash., calls attention to "the increasing use of highly discreditable Negro characters appearing in the funny strips now running in many of our daily newspapers. . . . The Negro is also being exploited by a vicious attack upon his social status over the radio by several advertising companies in their 'skit broadcasts.' We sat supinely down and permitted the owners of 'Amos 'n' Andy' to exploit us to their hearts' content and the filling of their pockets, but if sufficient protest is made now, these new attacks can be checked."

Mary Washington describes the "auction blocks" in the Bronx, where domestic workers go every day to get hired. "On several corners on Walton Avenue, between 160th and 170th Street," she writes, "the houseworkers wait for white women to come and buy their labor. The women haggle over the price and often beat it down to ten cents an hour and set the clocks back into the bargain. Sometimes the young girls are hired for so-called bachelor apartments and get into trouble. And after all the waiting and haggling, it is only a few hours work we get—not enough to pay the rent or get clothes as well as food." The Domestic Unit of the Building Service Workers Union, at 236 West 55th Street, New York, is always able to supply houseworkers—at union wages.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

The Marxist Foundations of Humor

NOT the least of the countless advantages which Communists enjoy over the sad race of petty bourgeois —advantages and privileges so disproportionate as almost to amount to a social injustice —is the inexhaustible fund of hilarious merriment with which they are provided. Nine tenths of what is to the bourgeois matter for grave and solemn cogitation and debate, such as, let us say, the planning of economic recovery, the effects of Hollywood nudity upon the rising generation, the chances of the G.O.P. in the next elections or the Jubilee of King George, is to the Communist an occasion for boisterous fun. As Robert Forsythe[1] remarks, "the reading of an economic treatise by Mr. Stuart Chase becomes a matter of unalloyed joy." What a vitalizing force is that which can transmute Mr. Chase from a narcotic into a pick-me-up! Observe a representative bourgeois perusing his morning paper. His nervous twitchings as he glances through the financial columns will move you to pity unless you are made of particularly tough stuff. He will be all hot and bothered as he scans the political news; his eyes will be a-goggle as he reads the weighty words of the President to the pressmen; and his fist will suddenly clench as he comes upon the daily lie about the Soviet Union. But if you see a man splitting his sides with laughter over the same paper, I am ready to lay you generous odds that he is a Communist or in a fair way of grace to become one.

There is a crisis in bourgeois humor. Somehow things are no longer so funny. One hears complaints concerning the comic papers. It is significant that the professional bourgeois humorist, in order to be at all funny, is driven dangerously near to being seditious. The cover of a recent New Yorker picturing a Park Avenue couple being assisted out of their home by six servants was nothing short of a direct incitement to riot. A dear and D.A.R. lady in Washington, D. C., who bears an uncanny corporeal resemblance to Helen E. Hockinson's club ladies, told me that she could not tolerate The New Yorker in her house: "It is so gross and vulgar!" (I apologize to the young gentlemen of The New Yorker for the patent injustice of my friend's judgment.) But what is a poor bourgeois humorist to do if he is debarred from poking fun at the Social Register, the D.A.R.'s, the family, the church, the cops, the defenders of liberal democracy, in short, at all the most venerable foundations of capitalist society? I have seen some attempts to raise a laugh over Soviet society, over Stalin or Litvinov. But the results have fallen so flat that the line has had to be dropped. Humorous enterprises are, for business reasons, compelled to enlist the collaboration of Communist artists and writers. In England the Beaverbrook press cannot dispense with Low, the most devastating satirist of Beaverbrook policies and imbecilities. It is the same in France. Except for the pornographic items, the comic pages have to fall back on red-hot revolutionaries and to borrow from the staff of L'Humanité. Bourgeois humor is bankrupt; it is mortgaged to Red radicalism.

Despite their coign of vantage, Communists have not, in general, exploited as they might their humorous opportunities. The heinous charge of earnestness has even not infrequently been leveled against them. This is, to some extent, readily intelligible when one takes into account the grimness of the fight in the front line of battle. For my part, when the old liver is sluggish, I generally turn to purely comic periodicals for exhilaration—I mean publications from which one expects nothing beyond a stimulation of the diaphragm to hilarious agitation, such as The Times Book Review Section or Scribner's Magazine. I strongly recommend the former; it is the most consistently funny publication that I know. And the latter runs William Lyon Phelps's matchless corruscations of unadulterated fatuous inanity. I was therefore unprepared and pleasantly surprised to come upon such gems of rollicking humor as Robert Forsythe's articles in THE NEW MASSES. With all due respect to its many other talented contributors and with the deepest appreciation of their admirable reportages and social and political criticism, Forsythe's contributions are, in point of pure literary quality, far and away the outstanding feature of its numbers.

SO FAR as I know, Forsythe is the first master of humor in America, or indeed in any capitalist country (I am unable to speak in this connection of the Soviet Union, my command of the finer *nuances* of Russian slang not being all that it should be) to ground his humor upon plain and avowed Marxist foundations.

There are, obviously, no other possible foundations for humor. No less than any other form of literary expression, and probably more than most, humor and satire postulate fundamentals. With the great humorists of the past, such as Rabelais or Swift, the fundamental postulate was the irredeemable folly and vileness of man. "Do you mean to tell me," asked Rabelais, "that the world, having always been foolish, is now about to become wise?" Swift poured forth in a titanic fury of loathing and revolt his ineffable disgust and execration, his malediction on the vile and malicious race of Yahoos that infested the earth. Both Rabelais' and Swift's fundamental postulates were definite and sound so far as they went, so far as the vision and knowledge of their day permitted them to go. A world preyed upon by theocratic, feudal, monarchical tyranny, which imposed upon it, in order to preserve its own skin, the intentionally cultivated imbecility of ignorance and myth, was ineffably foolish. A world of class domination and exploitation, of wolfish scramble for individual profit was unspeakably and maddeningly bestial and vile.

But what Rabelais and Swift had no means of perceiving, and what Communist sanity enables us to know today, is that the folly and the vileness are not irredeemable, that they are not the outcome of a mythically invariable "human nature"; that they are, on the contrary, through and through artificial productions; and that the whole factitious, fraudulent, ramshackle edifice of trickery, greed and lies is today tottering to its inevitable doom.

With the great majority of vendors of humor today, what I have been terming the fundamentals of satiric humor remain much the same as in the days of Rabelais and of Swift. Their saleable laughter is founded upon the ancient mythological scapegoat, "human nature." Things and people are excruciatingly grotesque because they are stupid and vile. But it can't be helped, because that is human nature. Satiric humor is founded upon cynicism and pessimism. To admit that the old foundations of satire are an exploded mythological bubble, to cease being a cynic and a pessimist, would mean to become a Communist. And there are very weighty reasons for not becoming a Communist. Or, at least, if you are one, there are pressing reasons for being extremely careful not to let it be known. Hence the deepening depression in contemporary humor, and the desperate predicament of humorous writers. There is a world of difference between founding your humor, as did Rabelais and Swift, on a universally accepted myth which has never been questioned and trying to believe in a mythological chimera which has been exploded like a pricked bubble. The wretched humorist today either can have no convincing reason for being funny or he must be a Communist and consequently face the prospect of being kicked out of every editorial office.

Satiric humor is thus by way of becoming an exclusive Communist weapon, as machine-

[1] *REDDER THAN THE ROSE*, by Robert Forsythe, with illustrations by Gropper, Sanderson, Crockett Johnson, Mackey, Rea and Hilton. Covici, Friede. $2.

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guns and other mechanical aids to debate are for the moment exclusive capitalist weapons. It is hence of particular interest to see Robert Forsythe handle this branch of the Red Army's arms. We know that, since the war and the establishment of fascism, ridicule does not kill. Were it not so, such predestined victims as buffoon dictators like Hitler, Huey Long, Mussolini and Father Coughlin would long since have received the last consolations of religion. The general mental decrepitude of the capitalist world is manifested by its lack of humor, which renders the weapon largely innocuous. One may conjecture that, as the capitalist world sinks into deeper and deeper imbecility, the human faculty of laughter will be lost altogether and one of the last remaining distinctions between bourgeois and beasts will disappear. One might even indulge in the gentle pacifist fancy that the last battles between the remaining survivors of a decrepit world and the young humanity of the World Soviets may possibly be fought with humorous weapons, the last die-hards, white guards and hundred-percent Americans being good-naturedly laughed off the face of the earth. Something of the kind is indeed already beginning to take place with regard to the English, against whom Robert Forsythe has appropriately issued a formal declaration of war. The English have always been funny. But the laughter which they excited was apt to be somewhat wry, being largely mingled with awe for the confounded power of the most ancient capitalist nation. That power has now dwindled, as we learn from the official figures issued by His Majesty's Stationery Office, by 50 percent all round. Accordingly the English have become proportionately 50 percent funnier. By a simple arithmetical calculation it can be shown that in twenty years they will have become a thorough joke.

HUMOR as an alternative way of disposing of counter-revolutionaries when they become a nuisance may, however, be worth some consideration. For instance, what more is there to be said about Dr. Frederick B. Robinson after Forsythe has told us with the laconic brevity of supreme wit that "Frederick B. Robinson, president of the College of the City of New York, is an ass?" (Incidentally the superiority of the American over the English language may be noted. An English writer would have found it incumbent to specify precisely what sort of an ass is Dr. Frederick B. Robinson.)

Robert Forsythe has, as I have delicately been hinting, an unfair advantage. He is not afraid of being kicked out of editorial offices. He makes no pretence of offering the incense of his humor on the altar of any ancient mythological scapegoat or chimera. There is no symbolist or superrealist haze of mystery about his fundamentals. He throws his hand down on the table. People are asses because they are not Communists and the human species is at present divided into Communists and asses.

When collected in book form, his articles, affording as they do a varied satiric view of the American scene in these years, from Hollywood and Mae West to the D.A.R.s and Mayor La Guardia, from the stage and the soccer field to the Diamond Circle and the White House, suggest a comparison with Edmund Wilson's *American Jitters*. Wilson's jitters were a brilliant and scintillating piece of work. But candid as was the pathetic and heart-searching autobiographical chapter which they included, what an incomparably larger freedom and joy there is in the out-and-out, unquibbling, frankly Marxist humor! It is like stepping out of the asphixiating atmosphere of a spiritualist séance into the salt breezes of Battery Point. Non-Marxist humor is pessimistic and neurotic; Marxist humor is optimistic, healthy and joyous. Marxism is the Gay Science.

Or compare Forsythe's satire with, say, the humor of G. K. Chesterton. . . . But no, no; I will not insult Robert Forsythe. With a professional buffoon like G.K., humor enlisted in the service of every darkest obscurantist reaction consists of mass production by means of a few simple trade tricks and formulas. The most depressing thing about the professional humorist is the poor fellow's solemn obligation to be unremittingly funny at all cost. I shall never forget hearing Mark Twain on one of his pathetic lecture tours. "I have been paid to be funny for an hour and twenty minutes," he said in a tone which brought the moisture to my eyes. One of the features I like best about Forsythe is that his rollicking fun does not in the least prevent him from being in deadliest earnest. He admits no obligation to be funny. He has no scruple in turning suddenly round from his wisecracks and being as serious as he pleases. And his judgments on literature, the theatre, art, are marvelously sound. He can afford to give his reasons, both for his jokes and his judgments. He has no more need to hide behind mystic clouds than Litvinov has need to hide behind a smoke screen of diplomatic language.

All that I have been saying about the present crisis in humor is said and implied much more amusingly by Forsythe. Read and ponder in this connection his piece on Ring Lardner. It is sparkling humor, but it is also searching and fundamental criticism. And that is what humor should be.

I DO not wish to pay Robert Forsythe the questionable compliment of using superlatives. It is enough that he is first in the field of Marxist humor. To claim that he is the cleverest and most brilliant humorist ever would be assinine. But "cleverness" is not enough. Mere cleverness is nothing and worse than nothing. Mere brilliancy and cleverness are in literature what good intentions are in social life. They may serve the same damnable purpose. They may be things to spew at. In reading over *Redder than the Rose* I find my convictions concerning the tangled controversy about proletarian literature clarified and confirmed. So long as any work of letters, of thought, of art is the issue of a mind that has attained to the full sanity of Communism, it matters not one jot what the theme or treatment be, whether the work is about Marx or about Mae West, whether it deals with proletarians or with princes. And any literary product of a mind

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deformed by bourgeois ideology or immersed in the mists of mysticism or the darkness of cynicism and pessimism is not only not proletarian literature, but is bad literature in any sense. It is bad philosophy, bad criticism, bad fiction or poetry, bad satire, be it never so "clever" and "scintillating."

The present work of Forsythe is a sheaf of collected articles and such a collection is almost inevitably subject to certain deficiencies, to fluctuations of value, to defective balance and unity. It is not, in the strict sense of the word, a book. It is a joyful and triumphant trial display of the new weapon of Marxist humor, a general maneuver in preparation for field warfare.

Robert Forsythe is, almost certainly, a young man. He is probably fresh from Harvard—I deduce this from his detestation of Boston and his scholarly contempt for institutions of higher learning. (Moreover, Forsythe is wealthy. One has to enjoy large private means from well-invested capital or sweated labor to be a Communist writer. Only superhuman beings like Lenin can do it, as he did, on two dollars a week—and laugh. Lenin, like Stalin, had a Homeric, rib-shaking, nay, world-shaking laugh.) I picture Forsythe, from the dainty deftness of his trip on the light fantastic toe of humor, as a slim, maybe a trifle scrawny and undersized, slip of a lad with angel-blue eyes and a shock of golden curls. *Redder than the Rose* is his first appearance on the luminous horizon of Communist literature.

May I venture to express the hope that it will soon be followed by a more imposing, sky-scraping literary edifice? In one of his most remarkable articles, Forsythe has himself described, under the caption, "Down with the Novel!" the architecture of such an edifice. "I should like to see something in the way of reporting, autobiography, comment, philosophy and even nonsensicality . . . combined in one volume," he says. "I want writers to forget about the novel and concentrate upon expressing themselves in the way which is easiest for them and by indirection easiest for the reader." That is precisely what I have in mind. The new mind of the new humanity is not to be shackled by the old forms. Why the novel, the memoirs, the essay, the treatise, the poem, the satire? They are, like all products of the shabby bourgeois mind, outworn and artificial conventions. Novels are autobiographical, autobiographies are fictitious, poetry is prosaic and prosaic treatises are unreadable. Let the literature of the future employ every instrument in the orchestra of human expression in one grand chaos of Stravinskyian dissonance—but a chaos of which every note shall be part of a calculated unity, contributing to the total harmony of the whole.

"If somebody doesn't launch the new form," says Forsythe, "I may have to do it myself."

I challenge Robert Forsythe to carry out his threat and to do his damnedest.

ROBERT BRIFFAULT.

Singer of the Gumbo

ROAD TO UTTERLY, by H. H. Lewis. B. C. Hagglund, Holt, Minn. 25c.

THE articulate "boor who stomps out in the midst of a symphony," who "switches off the dial to turn again to The Daily Worker," who realizes clearly, with cow-donick on overalls, "how environment works up a feller's pants-leg to govern his thought," who is "always dreaming of Russia," is with us again — old Humpy himself, Gumbo Jake, as he likes to call himself, H. H. (*not the brother of Sinclair*) Lewis, in the fourth of a series of slim paper-covered booklets that appear about once every six months.

A pamphleteer, a class-fighter in a district where there were possibly five Communist votes in the last national elections, a guerilla —of necessity — carrier-out of his ideas and convictions, the man himself is in real life a sort of legend by now, a constant foreword to his poetry. There is a characteristic tale about him, to be found in an article by Conroy which appeared in Fantasy (Autumn, 1934) —how he started a poetry magazine for the express purpose of insulting poets, female and bourgeois preferably, and of the luscious French-Canadian poetess, her photo and verse effectively insulted, whose French-Canadian lover challenged him to a duel, whereupon Lewis—after much thought — decided on a weapon he figured would be most familiar to Frenchmen; the guillotine! And, in this book, there is a piece (too long to quote here) which tells—with the malice and merriment and in the Missouri small-town vernacular that only Lewis can handle—of how the Devil (this is still Bible-belt country, comrades, with wild weed and silver-tongued Bryan still running wild together) defied and double-dared to appear by preacher and congregation, *does* appear, whereupon "His anti-Darwinistic shape [the preacher's] Lunged for tall timber, like an ape—Leaving the whole bedeviled town To that one devastating clown,— To Utterly's psychologic brute Left laughing *in a Satan-Suit.*" One guess who that was.

It is this ideal but profound inseparableness existing between Lewis, man and poet, and his environment which is his strength.

> Here goading Ambition
> Hollers "gee" and "haw,"
> Here Jason old plug
> Lets a poofing "faugh."
>
> Oh how can *I* struggle
> And win through strife,
> Looking up a mule's pratt
> All of my life?
>
> Just when I'm a-musing
> What my *self* will be—
> Then Jason goes poof
> On the singletree!

Beneath that he "*really* wants to know" (my italic) what deadlier purpose is there than this, from the poem "That Smile."

> There's only one thing that I want to know
> About this genial gent,—
> Not how he can aid the starved mass below
> By leaving the rich content,
> Nor what he might do with that gay concern
> For business-in-government;
> Here's all that I really do itch to learn:
> *Does Rosy use Pepsodent?*

And where will you find a clearer statement than this?

> Out in the morning
> At the tick of four,
> Back to the tsk-tsk
> On the cowbarn floor,—
>
> Squirming in tsk-tsk
> Up to my chin,
> I know plumb certain
> What class I'm in.

Some may object to the buffoonery one finds between these pages, the conscious and disguising self-abasements, call him exhibitionist or prankster—I quote from memory this time—"Oh pawdon me [Lewis has cleaned outhouses for a living in his day], pawdon me, ladies and gents of the bourgeoisie, I am your humble friend, *Serving your end,* Slavishly begging your pawdon!" but these are shallow or frightened objections of pedants and prudes who cannot see that literature is a process and not a formula, is a living thing which grows as it must from relationships and conditions.

To paraphrase Lewis, he is not on any "left bank of the Mississippi, facing Paris," he is like Topsy, he just grew and grew in the countryside of which he writes, is as natural and true to type in his moods as is the capitalism which he fights, and so when he writes, expressing himself, he is at the same time expressing the authentic moods of his class, its humor, slyness, anger, so on—and this it is which is his strength, that he presents his truth as he sees it, spontaneously and with no elaboration or after-thought.

But in his work—very uneven at times, it must be said—there is every evidence of careful revision, sensitivity and original use of contemporary folk-slang particularly evident: "Nigger *Nineteenthirtyfoured* [my italic], Working for his bed'n board," ". . . the swarming bourgeoisie *Play tumblebug* on you and me." —And, as a certain Eastern Snob with Eliot and Proust and Karl Marx under one arm and bag of groceries and his stupefying black hat under the other arm put it, "boor, hell! this guy is more cultured than even I am. Goddamit, he's a classicist and a scholar!" A satirist, with the reverse meanings and language-subtleties that are the weapons of satirists, clearly understood withal, Lewis can be compared to Kenneth Fearing who, with a different set of experiences, himself set in a different background, drawing his style from a different set of literary influences, is the only other poet I know busily and successfully engaged in creating a proletarian poetry bearing fangs.

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A satirist, often unrestrainedly bitter and exclamatory, Lewis has done lyrics of a surprising delicacy and precision and these are among his best:

with tremulous nostrils and lung-shaken bellies
And out-reaching forefeet and sibilant manes
Go to the fugitive Petes and the Bills and the Nellies
With young that have never borne collar and chains.

from "Wild Horses," and from "Gravedigger's Poem":

The cabin yonder is my home;
I'm ever near for hurried calls
To trace four lines upon the loam
And dig four clayey walls;
In the social hush of pottersfield
My shovel rises and falls.

and this:

. . . It's slop-time and the hoboes grunt
Grace in that lousy den.

Finally, as is fitting, from the title-poem, "Road to Utterly"

From that old-portentous hill,
Through the plowing-under ill,
Even to the Bank-head Bill,

Year by year and day by day,
Whether Hyle or Wallace pray,

Worse by every mal decree,
Worse since Nineteen-thirty-three—
Bitter road to Utterly.

. . . .

Till the profit-system ends—
That's the road to Utterly.

Lewis is that rare thing in America, a peasant poet. Whispers reach us from time to time, breathing his name with Joe Hill's. I think him a better poet than Joe Hill, a different poet, at any rate, and that a real appraisal of him is very much in order. A review run recently in Partisan Review on American proletarian poets did not even mention him; Isidor Schneider and Jack Conroy, so far as I know, are the only ones who have taken his name to print. But that's not all of the point either, all problems of non-urban poetry are shrouded in critical neglect for that matter. I'd like to see some work on phases of this problem by our critics.

JACK BALCH.

Join Hand and Brain

A WORLD TO WIN, by Jack Conroy. Covici Friede. $2.50.

AFTER one book has been successful, according to bourgeois publishers, it is necessary, within a short time, to publish another, lest the fickle public of women's clubs forget you entirely. Jack Conroy, in his most recent book, probably suffered this prodding and economic pressure from the publishers. *A World to Win* sometimes gives a sense of haste and strain but it is still Conroy, still a revolutionary novel and worth reading, and despite certain criticisms that must be made it represents an effort of the author to deepen his narrative technique and enlarge his perspective by showing how, in the crisis, the world of the worker and the petty bourgeoisie interchange. It is a difficult task to write of this telescopic, sleazy world of two classes that are losing their boundaries.

The precise points of strength in this book lie in this deepening sense of two classes, in the psychological handling of the relationships between men and women, in a closer imbedding of the types in the social warp and in a tighter speech and colloquial observations. The weakness seems to lie in the use of what I will have to call bourgeois narration, in intellectualization and diffuse description. Instead of the gigantic, emotional, visual, factual life immediately and freshly observed, that distinguished his first book, *The Disinherited,* here we have a removed narration, intervention by the author, circumlocution and occasional decorative writing.

When Conroy leaves the direct, clear, muscular prose and the compelling incident of his first book, for the involved past-tense narrative style of this new book, he is running into danger. What is that danger? We can see it, in its most swollen and exaggerated form, in Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans,* and in her subsequent inarticulate prose and poetry. Miss Stein explains this past-tense oblique prose, in which nothing happens, no scene or impact of the present takes place, by saying that in American life there is no present, that nothing actually takes place. What she means of course is that in decadent American bourgeois life nothing takes place, there is a muffling of event, a removal. But of American proletarian life this is not true. American proletarian life is full of tremendous struggle, and the struggle must produce change as well. To express this, another technique is needed. In the world of the working class blows fall, hunger gnaws, walls are of cement, there is no remembrance of things past but a strong relish and embrace of the present for the conception of a future. Here there exists no equivocation of event. We do not need a muffled literature of dream and entrenchment. The techniques of one class cannot do the work of another.

This is why *The Disinherited* was an important book and why the present experiment is a dangerous one for one of our leading proletarian novelists. It speaks strongly for Conroy's inherent talent, that despite this thick past-tense narrative style and the labored plan of the book, this resort to the diffuse and the intellectual, the strong flavor and urgency of his incident continually thrust through the fabric. This causes a curious disharmony in the novel between its content and form. The vigorous folk language Conroy uses, the fine mid-western speech, tinged by the Irish, thrust out peculiarly from the muffled prose and past-tense telling.

The principal character is Martha Darrell whose shut-in life, blocked by the double doors of intellectual oversensitiveness and bourgeois puritanism, condemns her to spinsterhood. Her father is a professor whose mental world was as stuffy with the wadding of American Victorian literature as his house is with Victorian furniture.

Somehow, into her guarded life, just when she has begun to recognize her imprisonment and to despair of escape comes the rollicking Irish itinerant worker Terry Hurley, bringing proletarian actuality and vigor into her unreal existence. He already has a son, but he has another son with Martha and the remainder of the story takes up the divergent paths of the two boys, one destined to the hard world of the wandering worker, the other the illusory paths of bourgeois literary ambitions. But Leo Hurley the worker and Robert Browning Hurley the hopeful middle-class writer join again on the unending job lines. And as their paths converge in the depression that is uniting all classes, so too they draw new strength from the common strength of the Communist movement.

Conroy's real power blossoms out toward the end of the book when he leaves the Bohemian bourgeois world of Robert Browning Hurley and gives us the dogged miserable wonderful life of Leo and his wife, with their children multiplying like rabbits and the jobs disappearing as rapidly. Its climax comes in the terrible end of Anna, bleeding to death by the roadside, giving birth to her last child.

Here we have an enriched Conroy, a writer of enlarged emotional dimension. This new development is probably what he is after. It is a promise but it is also a danger. In his groping after an emotional deepening of form and content he must face the question whether the techniques of emotional narration hitherto used for one class, can be used for another class which has had another and hitherto untouched way of life. We may have to produce our own kind of feeling and immediacy of experience and expression just as bourgeois literature had to deepen and complete its own class form and content.

A World to Win is an important book to read as a landmark in the development of one of our most important writers, for Conroy is of too full and mature a proletarian vigor, he is too soaked in the life of the working class to be led permanently astray by the seductiveness of bourgeois literature and its forms, which gleam all the more brightly because bourgeois literature, in order to hide its putrescent reality has been forced to devote itself to adorning and polishing its surface.

MERIDEL LE SUEUR.

FATE OF DOOMED DEPORTEES IN
STRUGGLE
LOUIS ADAMIC
15 cents - TOMORROW, PUBLISHERS - 303 4th Ave., N.Y.C.

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Heroes and Assassins

HEROES AND ASSASSINS, by Stoyan Christowe. McBride. Illustrated. $3.

"TEACHERS, priests, tradesmen, peasants, students, merchants, shepherds, even housewives swore upon the open Bible whereon lay crossed the pistol and the dagger —swore to fight, at the cost of their lives, for the autonomy of Macedonia."

From this early point in *Heroes and Assassins* on the Marxist feels that he has solved the plot. He knows from other histories that an isolated, terroristic organization led exclusively by intellectuals and professionals, imbued with no more than a nationalistic drive and striving for no more than autonomy must live by and also die by its own pistols and daggers as Imro the Macedonian Terrorist is doing today. But the fifty year career of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, which forms the subject of the book, is so rich in revolutionary situations and convolutions that even the oldest Bolshevik may find surprises in it.

The book is unfortunately itself more a historic document of liberal ideology than scientific history. It itself partakes of the illusions whose tragic consequences it recounts. Let me illustrate this by sketching Imro's background with strokes of Christowe's inimitable stylistic brush:

> [After nearly 500 years of Turkish rule] The voice of Father Paissi rang like a bell through all Bulgar lands and awoke the people to the fact that they were a nation, that they had a glorious past, that they had illustrious kings like Simeon and Samuel, and like Kroum who used an emperor's skull as a drinking cup. After this the Bulgars began to think of their nationality, of schools and churches. . . .

Turkish repression culminated in the massacre of Batak and Perushitsa, which is thought to have been incited with Czarist gold as a pretext for an invasion. Dr. Henry Haskell, my grandfather, is said to have been the first to have drawn the newspapers' attention to it. This however is Christowe's interpretation of it:

> The Russian Czar, cloaked in the mantle of protector of all the Slavs, was disturbed in his quiet contentment by the thunderous exclamations of the British statesman [Gladstone]. So he led the armies of the Russians into the Balkans and drove the Turks out of Bulgaria.
>
> Once more then, after a hiatus of half a millenium, the horsetail [ensign of the ancient Bulgars] was hoisted on the pole of the Balkans. . . . "Macedonia for the Macedonians." They made this their slogan. The Macedonian Bulgars deserted, as it were, the horsetail, and instead took a piece of black cloth, emblem of serfdom and oppression, and across it embroidered with red silk the words "Liberty or Death." For nearly half a century now that has been the standard of the Macedonian comitadjis.

This flag dramatically symbolizes the inner, self-destructive conflict of the Macedonian organization: The red, the workers' color of life and freedom, the black, the fascist color of serfdom and oppression and the words, "Liberty or Death" which express the two opposites and unite them in suicidal unity. To this is sometimes added the skull and cross bones, emblem of poison, pirates, Hussars, terrorists. This was tattoed on the forearm of the Imro "executioner" Chernozemsky who killed King Alexander and Barthou.

As Christowe puts it, "The history of the Macedonian movement for liberation has many glorious pages in it. There are in it examples of epic heroism that rival anything in Greek tragedy. But these epic incrustations are tarnished with Imro's own blood letting. It may be nearer the truth to say that Imro's last decade of history has rather been one of self destruction than of struggle for self-rule for Macedonia."

There is a chapter in the book entitled, "Between the Red Star and the Black Shirt," in which stands the following:

> Finally, on May 5th (1924) the bomb exploded. On that day was published the fateful and fatal Vienna Manifesto. This manifesto proclaimed to the world, to such part of the world as cared to listen and to know, that Imro, Macedonia's old internal revolutionary society, had joined the Communist International.

Hereafter this one chapter does not ring true. Not that I would for a moment accuse Christowe of knowingly falsifying the facts. Regarding the Communist position on national autonomy, Christowe's incorrectness is tangibly demonstrable. He holds that "On the one side you have an old organization that has raised to a religion the idea of nationhood; on the other you have a world movement passionate in its zeal for social and economic justice but with only a tepid, and perforce, tactical interest in basic national traditions. I do not mean to say that the Communists are against national rights, but they do not put them above social-economic rights. They are not willing to fight for them."

Of course this is absurd. What are national rights but social? Is it not chiefly economic oppression which lies behind national oppression? Stalin says: "The amalgamation of nations into a single world economic system is possible only on the basis of mutual confidence and voluntary agreement; the formation of a voluntary union of nations must be preceded by the separation of the colonies from the 'united' imperialist 'whole,' by the transformation of the colonies into independent states" (p. 71). "Hence the necessity of fighting against the national insularity, narrowness and aloofness of the Socialists [and Imro] in the oppressed countries who have no desire to look beyond their national 'village pump' and who do not understand the connection between the liberation movement of their country and the proletarian movement in the dominant countries." (*Leninism,* vol. I, pp. 70-71.)

Aside from this and its general economic lapse, the book seems to me admirably complete (barring the omission of Imro's horrible misrule of Bulgarian Macedonia and its misrepresentation of the left movement called "Imro United"). But it is clear that the book's greatest defect comes from the fact that Christowe shares the lack of Marxian revolutionary theory which makes Imro's history a tragedy and hence makes his book a tale of horror such as I have never read before. This failing makes this otherwise monumental history exactly what the notebook of a naive woodsman is to a plant-and-animal ecologist: raw material. Indispensible it is, because of its accuracy, detail and illustrations. But it is raw material which the Marxist, in as far as he is a human ecologist, must analyze and then incorporate in his science. For always there was the economic moon, unknown to Imro and Christowe, which has controlled the tides of blood.

EDWARD HASKELL.

The Evidence for Soviet Russia

ARMED INTERVENTION IN RUSSIA 1918-1922. W. P. Coates and Zelda Coates. Victor Gollancz, Ltd. $3.25.

ONE of the most vicious patterns of thought developed under capitalism is that which throws the responsibility for violence in any economic or political struggle upon workers. If strikers picketing peacefully before a plant are set upon by the police, usually at the call of the empoyer, this violence and the casualties resulting from it are so reported as to give the impression that the workers were the instigators and, in effect, murdered and injured themselves. Thus, although labor history is a long chronicle of provocation and violence by the exploiting classes, it is labor that emerges from the account with the bloody club in its hand.

On the international scale it is the Workers' Republic in Russia that has been strung into this pattern. The Soviet government anxiously sought peace and made great sacrifices for peace from the moment it took power; it gave up concessions in China; it permitted without opposition the secession of the Baltic states; it gambled its interests at the Brest-Litovsk peace conference for the chance of world peace; it sold at a bargain price its vast railroad system in Manchuria, an imperialist stake for which any capitalist government would have plunged the world into war; it saw allied armies of intervention land at Archangel and Vladivostock and attempted to deal with them peacefully. Yet capitalist thinking unfailingly presents the U.S.S.R. as the aggressor and the recalcitrant.

The book under review should do something to unravel this pattern. It was written to demonstrate to the English public the stu-

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pidity and injustice of pressing claims upon the Soviet state without recognizing the counter-claims of the Soviet state for the deaths and damages caused by the Allied interventions. Its application, however, can be directly made to all the nations concerned. But the value of the book transcends this purpose. Aside from the question of the claims upon Russia, concerning which it is certain to be the definitive book, it is vividly illuminating as a history of the international relations of the young socialist state during its first years. The book consists almost entirely of documentary material. There is no pleading, only a mass of evidence.

What does this evidence prove? It does more than give the verdict to Soviet Russia. It displays the criminality of capitalist foreign offices with such dispassionate completeness that no advocate of international peace could retain any illusions that his objective is achieved as long as capitalism lingers on.

Soon after the October Revolution Allied observers in Moscow reported home that Soviet power was securely established. The Allied governments, however, instead of recognizing the Soviet state and joining in its peace efforts, attempted to destroy it, prolonging the World War and, in effect, fathering the Civil War. Mutinies in their armies of occupation and in the covering fleets, and seamen's strikes and labor pressure at home made it impossible for the Allied governments to continue to wage overt war upon the Soviet Union for any length of time. The war was therefore conducted through the "White" armies which became the mercenaries of capitalist imperialism. From the Allied foreign offices the operations were covered with a hypocrisy unbelievably foul and degenerate. At the very time when the Western front was deadlocked, when the Allies were beseeching America for more troops, regiments were landed in Russia as armies of occupation and the army of Czechoslovak war prisoners who had entrained for Vladivostock where they were to be transported to the Western front were kept within Russian territory and later were even ordered back into the interior in undeclared war upon the Soviets.

After the interventionist armies were compelled to leave the Archangel and the Vladivostock districts, the Allied governments sponsored the civil war. Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich, Wrangel were the principal leaders, whom they supported with money and military equipment. This equipment gave the "White" armies momentary superiority over the Red armies and brought them a few victories. But like the Red armies of China, the Red armies of Russia armed themselves from their enemies.

What were these "White" armies and "governments," whom the Allied powers sponsored and recognized as representing "the will of the Russian people?" They were made up of the defeated and demoralized forces of old Russia. Their leadership was characterized everywhere by brutality and corruption. Politically stupid, this leadership did not even know how to deceive the people of the districts in which the "White" armies operated, and had to be directed from London and Paris on how to put up a democratic front. Wherever they appeared the masses rose up against them. The Czechoslovak troops, consisting mainly of men of bourgeois democratic ideas, refused after a while to cooperate with them. The officers, in many instances were sadists and debauchees. The common soldiers could not be relied on, often deserting in whole battalions, after tasting their discipline. In the districts occupied by the "White" armies conscription and requisitions of goods and resettlement of the landlords infuriated the population. Brutalities to prisoners and pogroms of unbelievable ferocity characterized their rule. There was about them the feverish and fluently insane passion for blood and pleasure that characterize the demoralized and despairing. Yet, having ample knowledge of it, the Allied governments supported them until the last Wrangel regiments had been driven into the sea.

Even then the Allied governments did not give up. They encouraged Poland upon a war of invasion. Although Poland was in grave economic distress they officered and equipped the Polish armies which advanced gaily but were driven back in rout.

Out of this recital a number of conclusions are to be drawn of which the justice of the Soviet counter-claims for damages is perhaps the least important. One is the power and resourcefulness of the Soviet system; another is its hold upon the masses, the local population everywhere keeping up the fight when the Red armies were forced to retreat, and who have since given additional evidence of their devotion by entering into a collective system of agricuture and enduring years of privation for the establishment of socialism; a third has already been mentioned before, the dishonesty and degeneracy of capitalist imperialist diplomacy; finally there is the irreconcilable hatred and fear of capitalism for the socialist state which still today, eighteen years after its establishment, makes the slogan "Defend the Soviet Union" a duty for every friend of human advancement. ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

An Important Study of Soviet Life

FACTORY, FAMILY AND WOMAN IN THE SOVIET UNION, by Susan M. Kingsbury and Mildred Fairchild. Putnam's. New York. $3.50.

ENEMIES of the Soviet Union have often attacked the official statistics of the first workers' government as if Soviet figures were not as reliable as statistics of capitalist government bureaus. Now come two professors of Social Economy at Bryn Mawr College with a 334-page volume on *Factory, Family and Woman in the Soviet Union,* based largely on Soviet government statistics. This is what they have to say on the reliability of such figures as compared with government statistics in general:

> Statistical procedure has been built anew and developed gradually in the Soviet Union during the post-revolutionary years. Trained statisticians and facilities for handling masses of data had to be acquired. . . .
>
> Inaccuracy of detail and large margin of error are not unusual in many government statistics. The Soviet data apparently share still many of the usual limitations. Careful study nevertheless has led the writers to feel confidence in techniques being used. . . . Data from the Soviet Union have the great advantage of uniformity in principle and increasing uniformity in practice.

With this preface the writers launch into cool, objective appraisal—the first of its kind in English—of industrial and social life as affecting the family and the position of women. Included in the volume are 67 tables on every phase of Soviet industry and family life. The volume brings together again many of the facts already presented, less statistically, in Joseph Freeman's *The Soviet Worker,* but Miss Kingsbury and Miss Fairchild place more emphasis on the status of women in factories, in educational institutions, trade unions, collective farming and home life.

Their conclusions, carefully separated from statements of fact, are not such as will give William Randolph Hearst or his fellow fascists any material for their attacks on the Soviet Union. After describing the feeling of financial security throughout life that is given to the Soviet family, the authors conclude:

> The concern for the family, even so, has not been for a family dependent on tradition or the law, but only for a family maintained by the emotional and spiritual power inherent within itself. A family existing for the exercise of human affections, for companionship, stimulus and relaxation, nevertheless, needed a protective screen of social insurance and public service that might provide economic security against the hazards inherent in modern industrial enterprise.
>
> For the new family of Soviet Russia, the traditional home of the past, with all its complex economic and social functioning, has little meaning. A new center has been necessary. . . .
>
> Perhaps the new home will never be large or complex. Its tendency is to become a place of retreat, a kind of base, from which one goes for activity and to which one returns for recuperation. In that home the sexes are tending to play an equal part and each member of the family to participate according to his individual taste.
>
> Every member of the family, then, is receiving the advantage of the new home.

The book is the result of five years' work by the authors who spent about a year in the Soviet Union and four years more in translating source material and studying developments. Soviet officials, including V. I. Mezhlauk, chairman of the State Planning Commission, teachers and many other friends gave them every facility for the survey. The volume is one of the most important studies of Soviet life that has appeared in recent years.

GRACE HUTCHINS.

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News Item: White Guardists in the United States celebrate the Day of Russian Culture.

E. Cooper

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The Theatre

Toward a Genuine Negro Drama

SINCE his white exploiters have committed every possible crime against the Negro in the daily battle for food, clothes and shelter, it would be naive of us to expect him to have behaved differently in the field of art. Yet it is hard to remain cool when contemplating the hideous monster which is the American theatre's representation of the Negro. It is one of the major crimes in the entire history of art. Never has a "free" people been so brutally—and so expertly—degraded. Never has class-and-race chauvinism acted with such flawless consistency in hiding the living truth about a people under a blanket of loud and ornate fraud. Because the Negro, less inhibited than his white exploiter, readily channels his fears and hopes and joys into song and dance he is publicized to the world as a precious (yet dangerous) freak-genius—a primitive with one foot in the jungle, whose gift for entertainment it is part of the white man's burden to preserve. His spontaneous poetry of speech and action has been perverted into the Sambo-type—"the lazy, good-for-nothing, crap-shooting, razor-toting, ghost-ridden, sex-hopped Negro." His mass songs of rebellion have been faithfully misrepresented as deliciously naive entreaties to a divinity half-Christian, half-Voodoo. His universal poverty and shabbiness have been explained away by his "innate" laziness, "constitutional" concupiscence and his childish brain. He is, in sum, an ornament to American civilization to be admired for his talents, envied for his "pure" emotions and for the rest of the time despised.

There is ghoulish irony in the fact that a number of Negroes have been compelled to act in plays and films which entrench the very Sambo-fiction these actors are impatient to smash. There is irony, but far less pitiable, in the fact that many dramatists genuinely sympathetic to the Negro (O'Neill, Paul Green) have written plays which shatter their own creative purpose, which perpetuate the same conspiracy against the Negro character. Out of such contradictions of theory and practice we can hope for nothing of a basic change. As readers of THE NEW MASSES have seen time and again, fundamental changes involve much more than the concerted action of a few individuals no matter how great their industry or how inspired their thought. It is out of such an organization as the Negro Peoples' Theatre, recently discussed in these columns, that something positive and cleansing and illuminating will develop—a body of Negro actors and playwrights who are building a revolutionary drama movement—a creative part of the entire renaissance of Negro consciousness which has been nourished on the waters of revolutionary thought.

At a time like this it is essential to have before us such a body of discussion on the Negro drama as New Theatre Magazine presents in its July issue. It offers an embarrassment of riches in quotations, stimulating discussions, information, etc. George Sklar, whose profound concern with Negro dramatic material was manifest in *Stevedore,* offers a quick editorial survey of the problem, introducing the articles that follow. And Paul Robeson confirms the entire theme of The New Theatre issue when he writes of the African and American Negro problem: "These cultures must be freed, formulated and developed and this cannot be done without a change in the present system. The Negro cannot develop his culture until he is free."

It would be unfair to Langston Hughes to quote scraps from his account of "Trouble with the Angels," for his method of gentle annihilation is too enjoyable a reading experience to be mutilated by excerpts. Readers who still believe that *The Green Pastures* deserves their applause should be required to study this account of the amazing box-office success built out of "a naive dialect play about a quaint funny heaven full of niggers," and of the nauseating defection of the late "God."

Augustus Smith offers a thoroughly absorbing account of the role of the Negro "On the White Man's Stage." Beginning with 1821, when a Negro company produced Shakespeare in the African Grove on Bleecker and Mercer Streets in New York (only to be driven from the boards by a magistrate's court), he brings us down to the epoch of *They Shall Not Die* and *Stevedore.* The anti-Hearst campaign is indebted to him for a quotation from Hearst's New York American apropos of O'Neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings:*

> The failure of the audience to scrap the play and mutilate the players would be regarded as a token of public anemia.

Robert Stebbins' account of "Hollywood's Imitation of Life" is an altogether brilliant job, which deserves wide and serious reading. Lawrence Gellert, who has done invaluable work on Negro songs, contributes another illumination about "Sper'chules": "Dancing in Church." There are interesting passages from Herbert Kline's play "John Henry," and a number of absorbing reflections in Eugene Gordon's "From Uncle Tom's Cabin to Stevedore." In fact, a review of this issue of New Theatre automatically turns into a list of exhortations to read this and read that. The editors have done a valuable piece of work, they deserve the reward of a sell-out edition, but they need to be reminded that they have merely begun their work on the Negro drama. There is much to be said about the dance and a great deal to be written about the possibilities of the poetic drama on Negro material. I, for one, believe that such subjects as Toussaint L'Ouverture, John Brown and the numberless episodes in the Negro history of the last century offer by far the richest ground for the rebirth of the verse-drama since the time of Shakespeare. Will some Negro poet effect the restoration of poetic drama which bourgeois and revolutionary writers alike have been hoping for for years?

STANLEY BURNSHAW.

The Screen

The March of Time

THE newsreel is a habit. We have been taught for years that since the camera cannot lie and since seeing and hearing are believing and since the newsreel draws its material directly from life itself, that the film newspaper is the objective truth put on a screen. To a certain extent it does give one the illusion of reality, in contrast with the Hollywood dramatic product. And by virtue of its acceptance as realistic, the newsreel has become one of the most effective methods in the hands of the State of maintaining the status quo. Yet this powerful medium of propaganda is the most uncreative, undramatic (except in such rare sequences as an Ambridge Massacre or the United Front Parade in Paris last year) and generally the most poorly constructed class of films in existence. Except in a few instances the newsreel doesn't begin to achieve the excitement and drama which is latent in the documentary film. On the plea that its material is such news the newsreel simply isn't edited. There is nothing in the excuse of lack of time, because the greater part of each release is staged and faked.

With this situation, it was a simple enough matter to manufacture something that would reduce the orthodox newsreel to insignificance. That is exactly what the *March of Time* has done to the newsreel. The *March of Time* was inspired by the successful two-year-old radio program of the same name. It is presented by the editors of Time and Fortune in conjunction with Louis de Rochemont of the Movietone news. Releases are issued once a month; there have been four now. The subjects are planned in advance and worked out on paper; scenarios are written as for other films. The editors compile what they can from the extensive film library of the Fox

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Movietone news; they buy film from freelancers or from their own correspondents; finally, if necessary they enact sequences.

The episodes are carefully written and skillfully edited with a very specific point of view —the standpoint of a militantly alert capitalism. While the three best things in the four releases—the Hitler episode in the second release, the Huey Long sequence in the third and the section on the Soviet Union in the fourth—are not anti-working class, one of the other episodes did give a foretaste of what the *March of Time* will do in any acute political crisis. A completely reactionary, chauvinistic and fascist tendency appeared in the section called "Mexico," in release number three.

The off-screen voice states that "socialistic" Mexico had outlawed religion. But the clergy and the other generation of peasants are determined to continue their worship. There are scenes of improvised churches in caves. The scene shifts to the interior of a peasant's house. There are a number of children in a huddle, mechanically repeating again and again: "There is no God. There is no God. Professor Gonzales told us there is no God." This is acted so badly that it is embarrassing. The aged parents come in and hear the mechanical chant, "There is no God." The old man incites the whole village and they rush into the home of Gonzales, the teacher. We see a rope. He admits attacking religion and they seize him. The final shot shows the white wall of the Church with its cross. The shadow of the professor, hanging by his neck, is projected on the wall. The direct approval of lynching is pointed up by a closeup of the placard on the professor's body, stating he was killed for "socialistic education."

Up to now the furtherance of a clear political line has been subordinated to the major task of establishing the *March of Time* on the market. The *March of Time* plays up the Nye munitions investigation, makes fun of Huey Long, attacks Hitler and produces a sequence on the Soviet Union that is superficially favorable. The script that accompanies the Russian sequence is actually a subtle attack. But the editors made the opportunistic mistake of buying the film from Julien Bryan, a friend of the Soviet Union, who took his film with a friendly point of view.

The form of *The March of Time* is not a new development in cinema. The Soviet film makers are old hands at this sort of thing. But *The March of Time* has shown us how effective the newsreel can be. It provides an object lesson and a goal for the documentists in the revolutionary film movement. The Film and Photo League has for some time been working with the newsreel. While the very nature of their subject matter was exciting and dramatic in itself (the Ford massacre, for instance), their newsreels were formless and as poorly made as the commercial reel. A forward step was made with *Scottsboro* and *Hunger,* but the high peak was reached with *America Today, No.* 1, which contains portions that are as good as anything that has been recorded in films. And Nykino's *Harbor Scene* (1935), with a script by David Wolff (in itself a work of high literary merit) is a real achievement, superior to anything of the same genre produced in America. But these are isolated examples. There must be more, we must organize our production policy (we have the technical facilities); for the editors of *The March of Time* are correct when they shout "Time Marches On!"

PETER ELLIS.

Other Current Films

Men On Wings (Amkino): A Soviet sound film dealing with aviation and the training of Red Army aviators. Directed by J. Raissman, who gave us *The Soil Is Thirsty* (also known as *Soviet Youth*) a few years ago. As in his earlier film Raissman succeeds more fully in giving us a picture of the new generation in the Soviet Union than in dramatizing his particular theme. The infrequency of English dialogue titles contributes to the film's confusion.

G Men (Warner Bros.), *Let 'Em Have It* (Reliance), *Public Hero No. 1* (M-G-M): Hollywood still gives us films of organized crime. These two are exactly like the series of gangster-glorifying films of a few seasons ago, only now the just as evasive Department of Justice men are the victims.

The Glass Key (Paramount): An ordinary mystery film, evading the possibilities of Dashiel Hammett's book. However, Frank Tuttle, the director, has managed to incorporate two very small scenes that are good and original.

Escape Me Never (United Artists): A film version of a pretentious play about unimportant people, pleasantly acted by an overrated actress, Elizabeth Bergner. Some critics have had to fall back on the cliche that the film is superior to the play. So what?

P. E.

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Between Ourselves

JOSHUA KUNITZ is on his way to Soviet Russia, where he will serve as correspondent for THE NEW MASSES. We invite our readers to help give Kunitz his assignments. What do you want to know about the workers' republic? Are you interested in the private every-day life of the people? In what special phase of personal relationships—marriage, divorce, working conditions, vacations? Are cultural matters your chief concern? National minorities? Science in a workers' state? Sports? The more specifically the requests for information are stated, the better will be the material presented. Send us in your requests for stories from Soviet Russia.

THE PRIZE CONTEST for the best proletarian novel, conducted jointly by THE NEW MASSES and the John Day Company, Publishers, is keeping the judges up late these nights. Nearly a hundred novels were submitted, and many are good. We can't say yet when the decision will be announced—there are five judges and a novel takes time to read.

MICHAEL GOLD will write shortly on the proceedings in Paris of the International Writers' Congress for the Defense of Culture. Together with Waldo Frank, head of the League of American Writers, Gold was a delegate to the Congress, just concluded. In addition to his article on this gathering, Gold is to describe in future issues of THE NEW MASSES the actual operation of the United Front of Communists and Socialists in France, which has halted the onrush of fascism there.

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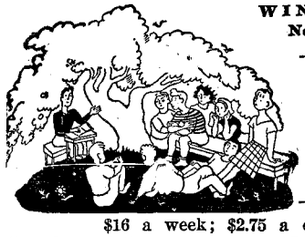

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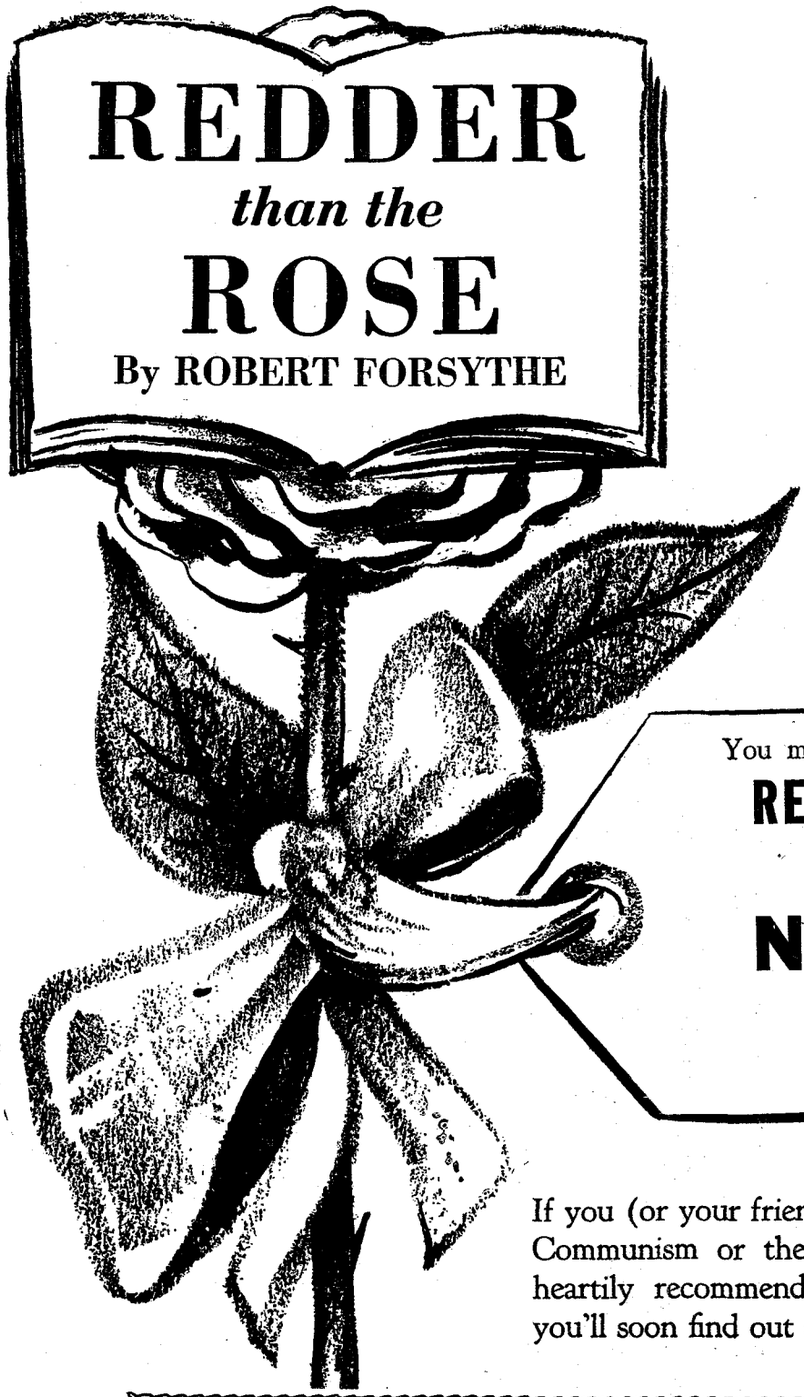

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